



Adventures in Ravenloft



10 adventures exploring the
Domains of Dread

ADVENTURES IN RAVENLOFT



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ADVENTURES IN RAVENLOFT

CREDITS

PUBLISHER: DMS GUILD

PROJECT OVERSIGHT: GRIM PRESS

DESIGNER: AARON GENTRY

EDITOR: JASON "SMACKDADDY" PRICE

ART: BOB GREYVENSTEIN, WITH ADDITIONAL
ART FROM DMSGUILD CREATOR RESOURCES

CARTOGRAPHY: AARON GENTRY

GRAPHIC DESIGN: TREVOR ARMSTRONG AND
AARON GENTRY

ADVENTURE WRITERS: JACK DUNCAN, AARON
GENTRY, BJ KEETON, DARRYL LEHANE, AND
WALTER SREBALUS

ABOUT THIS PRODUCT

The Dread Domains of Ravenloft are fraught with peril and the stuff of nightmares. As a new generation of adventurers learns about these horrifying realms through *Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft*, this product provides ten unique undertakings exploring ten different Dread Domains of Ravenloft.

ON THE COVER

Bob Greyvenstein illustrates the infamous vampire lord Strahd von Zarovich on his nightmare, Beucephalus.



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INTRODUCTION

Ravenloft is sometimes referred to as the Demiplane of Dread, or the Domains of Dread. It occupies a remote corner of the Shadowfell and is hidden from the rest of the Shadowfell plane by thick mysterious walls of mist. These mists separate the lands of Ravenloft from one another, often preventing travel between other planes and Ravenloft, but also mysteriously facilitating travel between other planes and even travel between different domains.

Ravenloft is a unique setting for *Dungeons & Dragons* because it is not a contiguous world like the Forgotten Realms, Eberron, Theros, or any of the other commonly known settings. Each of the Domains of Dread are self-contained demiplanes, some as large as a continent, others as small as a series of rooms.

Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft is the 5th Edition guide, not only to the known Domains of Dread, but also provides rules for creating your own demiplanes within this setting.

This isn't the first time Ravenloft has appeared as a setting in *Dungeons & Dragons* either. It dates back to the earliest editions of *D&D*. For instance, the land of Barovia, the setting for the popular adventure, *Curse of Strahd*, is a Domain of Dread of Ravenloft.

This collection of adventures contained within this product were written prior to the publishing of *Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft*, and as such, reflect the information available from previous sources. Even if not listed in *Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft*, the book provides information on creating new domains of dread, so we feel comfortable including adventures from older Domains of Dread as they may still exist in the Ravenloft setting, even if not expressly covered in that guide. In most cases, a Dungeon Master could easily transplant one of these adventures into another Domain of Dread.

ABOUT THE ADVENTURES

BAROVIA: A MURDER MOST INCONVENIENT

This murder mystery is set up by Strahd to amuse himself. He frames one of the characters for the murder and then sets the characters on the path of solving the murder as well, hoping to see the characters turn on one another and provide chaotic entertainment for his own pleasure.

BLUETSPUR: THOON & GLOOM

Rebel mind flayers worship a new elder brain within the mountain. Will the adventurers succumb to the powers of the elder brain? Or destroy it in the name of the domain lord, The God-Brain?

FALKOVNIA: THE ORB OF BALOK

Vladeska Drakov wants the characters to obtain a powerful artifact that may be capable of controlling all zombies within the entire domain of Falkovnia. Will they obtain this artifact for her? Or will they keep it for themselves?

HAR'AKIR: THE DESERTS OF HAR'AKIR

Ankhtepot, the Dread Domain lord of Har'Akir has been trapped for centuries, but now a plot is afoot to release him from captivity. Will the characters simply be pawns in the plot to release him?

LAMORDIA: THE TIMEKEEPER'S TOWER

The Timekeeper's wife has taken a child hostage in the clock tower. Or is she an imposter? She died long ago, but has returned. The players have a mystery to solve and a child to save in this adventure exploring a clockwork maze of traps.

FORLORN: SACRED GROVE

The druids of the corrupted forests of Forlorn are locked in an endless battle against the corruption. When the characters arrive in Forlorn, they are tasked with helping the druids in their fight. To do so, they must complete the tasks in the new sacred grove, or it will be lost.

MARKOVIA: MORDACITY IN MARKOVIA

The island of Markovia is filled with beastmen created by the domain's lord. When the characters arrive there, they must survive the feral creatures of the land and make their way to safety while being hunted on their journey.

AGGARATH: BLOOD & RUBIES

Trapped within the jeweled broken dagger of Aggarath, the characters will face their darkest aspects in order to escape... hopefully with their souls intact.

SARAGOSS: THE RACE TO SHORE

The characters are shipwrecked in a Domain of Dread filled with wrecked ships, dangerous undead, and weresharks. The characters and crew will have to make their way from wreck to wreck, fighting their way towards the distant shore if they're to survive.

SRI RAJI: THE DEPTHS OF MADNESS

Deep in the jungle, people are going missing. The characters are quickly drawn into this mystery and must figure out what dark force is killing everyone from traders to sacrificial prisoners.

NPCs

All NPCs for the adventures are listed in **Appendix A: NPCs**. At the beginning of the appendix, there is a chart showing where to find those NPCs listed in official *Dungeons & Dragons* products.

MAPS

Gridded battle maps can be found in **Appendix B: Maps**. Additionally, we have provided all maps, gridded and non-gridded, in an accompanying ZIP file for your convenience.

A MURDER MOST INCONVENIENT

AN ADVENTURE FOR FOUR TO SIX CHARACTERS OF ANY LEVEL

Written by Darryl "Blokka" Lehane



BAROVIA

The valley of Barovia is one of the oldest of the Domains of Dread. The entire valley was transported from the prime material plane at some unknown point in the past, by entities simply called the Dark Powers. Ruled over by Strahd von Zarovich, it is as much a prison for him as it is for the other inhabitants.

INTRODUCTION

In *A Murder Most Inconvenient*, the characters are hired by Strahd, via cryptic letter to solve a murder in the Village of Barovia. The body of an adventurer by the name of Van Yondu, was found on the road leading to town. This adventure is aimed for a group of four to six characters of any level. It can easily be adapted for any level as it requires problem solving, rather than brute force.

CONTENT WARNING

This module deals with the murder of an individual. This could be distressing to some players. Anywhere an NPC gives a description of the act itself or the state of the body, downplay these as needed.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

This adventure is based in Barovia, the home of the Strahd Von Zarovich. It is as much his prison as his domain, and he longs for release from it. In the meantime, he plays sadistic games with those in his domain to amuse himself.

His latest amusement went a little bit awry, and now he is vexed. He had planned to cause some unpleasantness for another group of adventurers, by putting them in contention with another adventurer. Disguised as one of this group he went and picked a fight with a thief named Van Yondu. Unfortunately Van Yondu took it a little far and Strahd was 'forced' to kill him.

Strahd is vexed that his original plan fell apart, but now has an even better one! He will get the adventurers to investigate the crime in the hopes that the one he impersonated is blamed for it!

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Below are two different ways our adventurers could have been pulled into this adventure.

NEW ARRIVALS

The group has just been pulled in by the mists and is making its way to the village of Barovia. This will be their first encounter with Strahd. An arrow flies out of the gloom and lands in front of them. Commanding them to move with haste. They are required to solve the murder of another adventurer.

THE MAP SAID TO TAKE THE NEXT LEFT!

The adventurers are in some other part of Barovia, or perhaps another Domain of Dread entirely. They turn a corner to find the village of Barovia ahead of them. An arrow with a letter attached lands in front of them. Commanding them to move with haste. They are required to solve the murder of another adventurer.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This adventure will consist of an investigation in the village of Barovia into the death of one Van Yondu, another adventurer.

Sent by Strahd to solve the crime. The group does not realize that Strahd was the real killer and is trying to frame one of the adventurers for the crime. They also don't realize that he doesn't really care if the real killer is ever found, only that he is entertained by the unfolding events.

As the DM you will be required to utilize descriptions of the NPC's to drop hints that are almost correct and that make it seem like it might be one of the players that is the killer.

They will be directed to execute the killer by Strahd in another letter later on and whether they are willing to or not will determine how Strahd rewards their efforts. The more entertained he is, the more generous he will be.



DETERMINING THE PATSY

Roll a die equal to the number of players. Randomly assigning a number to each player. The number you roll is the patsy. In the next section **Determining the Clues** pay special attention to their descriptions, as these will be the basis for the clues used in the adventure

DETERMINING THE CLUES

At the start of the game ask all the player's to describe themselves. What they are wearing, any distinguishing features, carvings on weapons. Anything that stands out about them. Make a note of all of these. The ones given to you by the patsy will be the basis for your clues throughout the adventure. So, be sure to make careful note of these.

You will also use these clues to describe NPC's introduced. For example: The patsy says they are wearing a black scarf. You might introduce one of the NPC's as also wearing a black scarf, or one being in the vicinity of the NPC.

The idea is to create a situation where it is not obvious that a player is being framed as the killer, unless all the clues are put together.

LETTER FROM STRAHD

Open the adventure with the player's making their way along the road to the village.

Whichever hook you choose the players approach the outskirts of town. As they do so an arrow comes winging its way out of the gloom and thuds into the road in front of them. Attached to it is a rolled parchment. If the players refuse to take the parchment another arrow comes out of the night. Have your players roll a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw. The player who rolls the lowest failed save is grazed by the arrow taking 1 piercing damage. Roll this again each time the players refuse to take the parchment.

Once they do take it, Read the following to the players:

Adventurers,

Greetings! I hope this finds you all well. Unfortunately, I myself am not well, I am quite vexed in fact. There has been a murder in my fair domain, a murder most foul. An adventurer like yourselves had recently arrived in our fair lands, only to be laid low on this very road.

This is troubling as I had not had the time to welcome our new guest. You must be the arm of my retribution. Go now into the village. There you will meet one Ismark, who will show you the scene and allow you to interview the townsfolk.

You have one day to determine the killer's identity before I send my own investigators to pull the truth from the townsfolk.

- Lord of Barovia, Strahd von Zarovich

Make sure that the tone of this letter is both sarcastic and threatening.

MEETING WITH ISMARK

Ismark is the de facto town burgomaster of the village of Barovia following his father's death.

As the players enter the town describe to them the setting. The Village of Barovia is one of the most oppressed villages in Barovia, sitting as it does at the foot of the valley below Strahd's castle. An overcast sky looms over a depressed array of simple buildings and those villagers that are out and about, move hurriedly and avoid eye contact with the party.

Ahead of them they see a man, that could be either a beaten down young man or a fairly spritely looking middle aged one. When he sees the adventurers he raises a hand gesturing them over. Read the following to the players:

"Hello Adventurers. You must be the ones sent to investigate this murder, I ask that we move with haste. Longer introductions must wait for another time. The investigators that will be sent should we not solve this today would be most unpleasant to say the least. I will take you right away to the body."

He then gestures for the party to follow to a large building that he informs them is the town hall.

TOWN HALL

As the players enter the main foyer of the building they see what is clearly a body covered by a sheet on the floor. The sheet is beginning to turn red with blood from the body.

Ismark walks towards the sheet and lifts it up for the players to look at. Read the following:

"We found him less than an hour ago. Within minutes a note arrived from the castle, informing us that investigators would be coming and that you have one day to solve the crime before he sends other more motivated investigators." Ismark pauses here looking concerned, before continuing. "So I implore you all, make haste, or it is all of us that will suffer!"





THE BODY

Let the players examine the body. When they do get each player to roll an DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation). For each success or failure explain to the group the information from the table below:

BODY INVESTIGATION

Result	What They Can Determine
All Fail	They can determine that he is indeed dead. But have no idea what the murder weapon was. That he was human is also apparent.
1 Success	They notice that he was killed using a weapon that is of a type used by the killer (blunt, piercing or slashing) but cannot determine what type.
2 Successes	They notice that Van Yondu has defensive wounds on his hands, so he fought back, his killer may be injured in some way.
3 Successes	They notice that Van Yondu has on his person a set of lockpicks and other tools of a master thief. They also notice an empty dagger sheath on his right hip.
4+ Successes	They notice all of the above and are also able to determine the exact type of weapon used by the killer

Once they finish investigating the body, have Ismark come back on the scene and read out the following:

"In anticipation of your needs I have gathered together at the inn, five townsfolk who were in the area at the time. They may have some information for you, or they may be the killer themselves. You can question them and make your determination. Again I implore you to be quick."

Ismark's face tells the story of a man barely holding on, for fear of the retribution that will be delivered to the deserving and undeserving alike should you fail in this task.

He then leads the party from the town hall and across to the inn.

QUESTION TIME AT THE INN

When the party enters, they see a motley array of townsfolk before them. Read out the following:

Before you stand the most motley crew of characters you could ever hope to behold. Five townsfolk huddling around a single table, looking like they wished they could be anywhere but here.

The first one, an old lady, bent with age and almost blind. The second, a furtive looking middle aged-man, with lank greasy black hair and a pockmarked face. Third, a young girl with red hair, green eyes and a smattering of freckles. Fourth, a young woman with a face like iron and a scar running from temple to chin. And finally a tall man, almost seven feet in height, who could be anywhere between twenty and fifty, and looks put together with string, as if his joints would at any minute fly off.

Once the players have all moved into the inn and noticed the NPC's, Ismark introduces them to the players:

ELEANOR GRANGE

Eleanor, female human **spy**, is the red-haired child. She was seen skipping down the road after the murder this morning, seemingly unconcerned about the death and even now unflustered. She is carrying Van Yondu's dagger and will admit to stealing it from the corpse if successfully intimidated with a DC 12 Charisma (Intimidation) check.

Motive: Van Yondu talked down to her and called her "child." Eleanor is psychotic, that was enough for her to want him dead.

MARCUS DU'PONT

Marcus, male human **bandit**, is the pockmarked man. Marcus looks like a rodent made flesh and is a layabout. Ismark has no idea why he was out and about this morning. A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check will reveal that he is limping. He will try and lie his way out of it and only a successful intimidation will get him to admit he was trying to steal a neighbour's horse and was kicked for his trouble. He was limping home when the body was brought into town.

Motive: Van Yondu convinced him to steal the horse. It was supposed to be a two man job but he never showed. After being injured he was seen walking back to town, from the direction of the body. He was looking for Van Yondu and wanted to kill him, but never got the chance. He found his dead body lying on the ground and saw someone running into the trees, fleeing the scene, then decided to limp home as quick as he could to avoid being blamed.

FELICITY YOUNG

Felicity, female human **thug**, is the woman with the scar. Felicity is a serious young woman, who was almost the victim of a werewolf attack when she was younger. She now trains every day to make sure that doesn't happen again. She carries the same weapon as the patsy. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check will reveal that she is also limping. When asked she will freely admit that her brother Victor injured her during their morning sparring session. She was walking off the shame of losing to her brother.

Motive: She hates Van Yondu for making a snide remark about her "cooking him some eggs" a few days ago, when she was sparring with her brother.

GRANNY WHITAKER

Granny, female human **commoner**, is the woman bent with age. Granny is an old-timer and tough as boot leather. She was out taking her morning walk when the murder was committed. She knows little, but can be used to sow some confusion as she will ask the player's to speak up constantly. You can also have her ask to speak up even if questioning other NPCs to create some confusion.

Motive: Granny is a con artist, she is no invalid, and uses this to her advantage. Two days before she was conned by Van Yondu on some glasses of truesight. She was convinced that he gave her a legitimate pair, but the enchantment wore off them an hour after he left and she had given him her good dagger as well, the one missing from his belt now.

ALFRED HOWARD-MARCS

Alfred, male human **scout**, is the tall thin man. Alfred is a local hunter. He was out and about checking his traps, and saw the murder. Though he had no clear view of the killer. He only knows what the killer is wearing, although he gets some details slightly wrong.

Motive: Alfred almost caught Van Yondu two days earlier stealing from his traps. Those traps help feed the people of Barovia and Van Yondu got away with half a dozen fat hares. Alfred hates poachers and would happily gut them.

QUESTIONING THE NPCs

Use the descriptions below to determine what each NPC tells the players. Some will react better to intimidation, some to more persuasive techniques. Let everyone question them. But once a character has successfully passed a roll, they have no further information to give on that roll.

Remember also to add an item that the patsy has to each NPC. This will be important when Alfred explains what the killer was wearing. You can use the same item for multiple NPCs, but try and spread them out, and make sure to use them all when explaining what Alfred saw, remembering that he will get them slightly wrong.

They can question the NPCs in any order they choose:

ELEANOR

When questioned, she remains calm and talks in a quiet, flute-like voice. She is a beautiful child, although there is a chilling aspect to her calmness, as if she lacks any empathy. She will reveal the following information, if asked.

On a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check, the players will notice the dagger in her possession. Remember to also add an item of the killer's to what the players see. When they ask her where she got it, she shrugs.

If the characters attempt to intimidate her, a successful DC 12 Charisma (Intimidation) check prompts her to reveal she found the dagger on his body when she was out picking daisies to make her mother a necklace. On a result of 16 or higher, she also reveals that Van Yondu treated her like an idiot two days ago and she is glad he died, because "rude people deserve to die." Read one or both of the two statements below to the players, depending on the result of the roll.

On a result of 12 or higher, read the following to the players:

She looks at you from under impossibly long eyelashes, her eyes devoid of anything resembling human emotion, "I found the dagger on his body. I was out picking daisies to make Momma a necklace. She's dead and buried in the backyard now. I found her you know. She was cut up just like the man, with all her insides on the outside. The man from the church told me not to fear, she was with the gods now. But I don't think the gods come here anymore, what do you think?"

Eleanor says this delivered in the same flute-like voice and without a lick of compassion.

On a result of 16 or higher, read the following to the players:

She looks at you again. The slightest sign of a frown marring her porcelain features. "He was rude to me the other day. Talked to me like I was a silly child. I am glad he died. He was mean. I think all mean people should be killed." She stares off into space and says nothing more on the subject.

If the characters attempt to persuade her, she lies, saying she found it in her yard. She then begins toying with her hair and singing a creepy tune.

MARCUS

When questioned he is anything but calm. A DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check will reveal his injury. He will attempt to hide the truth unless scared into telling it.

If the characters attempt to intimidate him, a successful DC 12 Charisma (Intimidation) check reveals he was trying to steal the neighbour's horse and got kicked. He will go on a short rant about how you think he's the killer, but it wasn't him. If the result is 14 or better, he will admit that he was sent to steal the horse by Van Yondu and that he was in the woods, but lays the blame on Alfred, who he saw running into the trees. Read one or both of the two statements below to the players, depending on the result of the roll.

On a result of 12 or higher, read the following to the players:

He looks at you with the eyes of a cornered rodent. "Alright, alright. I was injured stealin' an 'orse, okay. I didn' kill no one you 'ears me? I am a stand up citerzen," he says, as if stealing isn't a crime. "Leave me alone, you alls just blame the weird lookin' guy. It's me curse to always be blamed." He sighs theatrically as he delivers the last statement.

On a result of 14 or higher, read the following to the players:

"Alright fine. I was angry after I got kicked. Went out into the woods to try'n find Van Yondu an' give 'im a piece of me mind. But 'e was already dead when I found 'im. I saw someone running off into the woods though. It was Alfred, the 'unter. 'e was the one t'was killed Van Yondu, I would stake me life on it!"

If the characters attempt to persuade him, he lies, saying he fell down while walking in the woods and asks why the party is singling him out.

FELICITY

When questioned she gets quite defensive. She doesn't like being questioned. If the characters were able to determine the weapon type during their examination of the body, a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that she carries the same sort of weapon as the patsy. The same result also reveals she is injured and limping.

If the characters attempt to intimidate her, no attempts work. She will not talk if intimidated. If this is the first action, she refuses all other questions.

If the characters attempt to persuade her, a successful DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check prompts her to reveal she was injured by her brother while sparring and was out walking to work off the anger of losing to him. On a result of 14 or higher, she will reveal her motive to the players. Read one or both of the two statements below to the players, depending on the result of the roll.

On a result of 10 or higher, read the following to the players:

She looks at you angrily. "Fine. I was sparring with my brother this morning." She points to the weapon on her hip, then continues. "He whopped me a good one on the leg, I was careless and he got lucky. I went for a walk to work out the kinks and the anger. That's all. I didn't see anyone living or dead until I got back to town."

She crosses her arms defensively and falls silent.

On a result of 14 or higher, read the following to the players:

She looks ready to get up and leave. Her anger makes the scar on her face stand out in stark contrast. "Fine. I hated the guy alright. He was a piece of offal. He made a comment about me cooking him some eggs the other day. Like I was his drudge. I wanted to kick his ass.

But I never got the chance. Someone else did it for me. Now leave me alone." And with that, she gets up and stalks away from the table.

GRANNY

When questioned she asks the players to repeat everything. She is half blind and almost deaf.

If the characters attempt to intimidate her, no attempts work. She pretends not to hear and just asks the players to repeat everything until they give up.

If the characters attempt to persuade her, a successful DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check prompts her to reveal she was taking her morning walk and came upon a scene that will keep her up at night. On a result of 14 or higher, she will reveal her motive, though she still lies about it. Read one or both of the two statements below to the players, depending on the result of the roll.



On a result of 10 or higher, read the following to the players:

She looks at a point just behind you, as if her eyes are having trouble focusing. "I was out for my morning walk. I came across the body. That young red headed child ... what is her name? Elephant? Albatross? No matter. She," Granny points at Eleanor, then continues. "Was hovering over the body real suspicious-like and taking something from it. She's a cold hearted child that one, you mark my words, she gutted him like a fish! That young man's innards were on the outside, he was definitely dead, after she had her way with him.

"Ohh, he reminded me of my third husband Harold ... no wait, my second husband Earl. Harlold was the one with the limp and the gamey eye. It was all just hanging out, the innards, not the eye ... She killed her own mother you know?"

After that she trails off into silence.

On a result of 14 or higher, read the following to the players:

Granny looks at you with rheumy eyes. "I will tell you one thing. That young man was a con artist. I bought a pair of glasses from him the other day. He said were enchanted to help an old lady's sight. They stopped working an hour later. I had given him my first husband's dagger. That was Errol. Oh he was a catch old Errol. Chin like the front of a ship and muscles til teatime. Of course I was a catch myself back in those days."

She stops here to give what you assume is a meant to be a seductive wink. "Oh I do miss him ... Errol, not the con-artist, may he burn in the hottest hell for taking advantage of a kind old lady."

With that she slowly gets up and shuffles off.

If all checks fail, she reveals nothing and apologizes to the player's for being hard of hearing.

ALFRED

When questioned he is more than happy to share. No checks required.

He will reveal that he saw the murder and that he saw what the murderer was wearing but not their face. He goes on to explain the clues you were given at the start of the adventure by the patsy. If the players were able to discern the weapon used, he confirms the type. If he is questioned after Marcus he will angrily refute Marcus's claims that he is the killer. Read the following to the players:

He looks angry as he walks up to the table. "That Marcus is a damned liar. Yes I was in the woods and yes I ran off. But that is only because I was chasing the real killer. I saw him with my own two eyes!"

After that give the players the descriptive information you received from the patsy, but make sure it is vague enough not to make it too obvious.

If the players want to question Alfred further they may make a DC 14 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check, if successful, Alfred will admit to his motive. On success, read the following to the players:

He looks at you and sighs. "Alright. I didn't like him. He was a thief and worse a poacher, I caught him three days ago stealing from me traps. The ones that are meant to feed the town. Bloody cheeky little bastard he was. If I had caught him I would have skinned him!"

He pauses, realizing what he just said and to whom, "Figuratively I mean. As I said, I didn't harm a hair on his head. I just found him dead and chased after the killer. Bastard was too fast though. Just couldn't keep up."

Once the players have interrogated all the NPCs it is time for them to deliberate. Give them time to discuss their findings, then when you deem they have an idea of how they are going to decide, start the next part.

A NEW LETTER

Ismark walks back in from outside holding a letter in his hands. He informs the players that like the last one, it was delivered by an arrow out of nowhere. He hands it over still sealed. Once the player's crack the seal, read the following:

"My intrepid adventurers,

I see that your work moves apace. Knowing that you will likely soon reach a consensus, I believe it is time for me to inform you of what action I wish you to take when you find our killer. I want you to take them to the centre of town and execute them straight away. Failure to do as I have requested may have dire consequences.

- Lord of Barovia, Strahd von Zarovich

After the players have read the letter, give them a few more minutes to discuss their findings, then move onto the sentencing!

DECIDING GUILT

When the characters return, the NPCs are all attentively waiting to hear what has been decided.

ACCUSE THE PATSY

If the player's choose the patsy, allow the player to react. If they choose to go quietly, move onto the sentencing, if they choose to run, continue on with the chase. Either way, the players are on their own here. The NPCs will not move to help them.

ACCUSE AN NPC

If they pick one of the NPCs, the NPC doesn't wait. They just bolt to the door like a lightning bolt and try to escape. Even Granny, who it will become obvious now, was lying about her infirm state. See the Chase rules below.

NOTE: THE CHASE MAP

The next section is a chase through the Village of Barovia. For a map, you can use the Barovia Village map included with *Curse of Strahd*, or any generic village map can work.

THE CHASE

The NPC or Patsy are trying to make their escape. The players need to stop them and bring them back to face justice! If this happens, use the rules for running a *Chase* found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* on page 252 using the following **Village Chase Complications** table to roll for Hazards each round. The players start in the inn, the NPC has already made it through the door. Get the players to roll initiative. Give any NPC fleeing an initiative of 15. As a reminder, keep the following rules in mind:

Exhaustion. You can use the Dash action a number of times equal to 3 + your Constitution modifier. For each Dash action after that you must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution check or take one level of exhaustion. Your speed becomes 0 when you reach level 5. This includes the NPCs.

Hazards. Every round, there is a chance the characters or NPCs will encounter a hazard. Each round roll on the following table and have each chase participant make the required save or skill check, if necessary.

VILLAGE CHASE COMPLICATIONS

1d20	Type	Complication
1	Ditch	Make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw to avoid falling in the ditch. On a failed save you fall prone.
2	Cramped Alley	Make a DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to get through this space. On a failed check, the obstacle counts as 10 feet of difficult terrain.
3	Blind Corner	Make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, you are blinded until the end of your turn. While blinded in this way, your speed is halved.
4	High Fence	Make a DC 14 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to get past the obstacle. On a failed check you fall prone.
5	Cart in the Way	Make a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (your choice) to get past the impediment. On a failed check, the obstacle counts as 5 feet of difficult terrain.
6	Funeral Procession	Make a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (your choice) to make your way through the crowd unimpeded. On a failed check, the crowd counts as 10 feet of difficult terrain.
7	Clothesline	Make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw to avoid it. On a failed save, you are caught as if in a net and restrained.
8	Herd of Cows	Make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, you are knocked about and take 1d4 bludgeoning damage and 1d4 piercing damage.
9	Uneven Ground	Make a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to navigate the area. On a failed check, the ground counts as 10 feet of difficult terrain.
10	Maze of Crates	Make a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Intelligence check (your choice) to pass. On a failed check, the maze counts as 10 feet of difficult terrain.
11-20	No Complication	



NPC OR PATSY ESCAPES

The quarry can attempt to escape if it is out of sight for all of the pursuers. They make a Dexterity (Stealth) check and must beat the passive Wisdom (Perception) scores of the pursuers.

PLAYERS OVERTAKE NPC OR PATSY

Once overtaken the NPC or Player can be tackled to the ground or attacked. Use standard grappling rules for tackling. The NPC will throw down their weapon (on their turn) and surrender if injured.

Once the chase is complete, have the players head back to the town square and move on to the final phase of the adventure, the sentencing.

SENTENCING

Now the players must decide what to do with their prisoner. Will they execute them as ordered? Will they have them imprisoned? Or something else entirely?

This choice is up to the characters, but it will have consequences. Below are a few of the choices and the outcomes they will receive.

ARREST AN NPC AND EXECUTE THEM

Strahd was looking for entertainment and obedience, not punishment, so regardless he is quite pleased that his orders were carried out. Another letter on an arrow arrives, along with a reward of 25 gp per character. Read the following to the players:

*My loyal servants,
Well done! You made a good choice and distributed justice. Take this payment as thanks and as a hope that you will remain as loyal and entertaining in the future.*
- Lord of Barovia, Strahd von Zarovich

ARREST AN NPC AND IMPRISON OR FREE THEM

Strahd is not pleased. He ordered you to do something and you failed at it. No letter arrives. Instead a foul wind blows through, sapping the energy from the player's bodies. They suffer a negative 1 to a single ability score. This ability score can only be gained back by a remove curse spell or similar magic. Roll on the table below for each player to determine which one.

FOUL WIND

1d6	Ability
1	Strength
2	Dexterity
3	Constitution
4	Intelligence
5	Wisdom
6	Charisma

THE NPC GOT AWAY

Strahd is still quite happy. He was very entertained. He sends the same letter and same reward as executing with an added promise that the NPC will be hunted down. Which is true.

The only one this is not true for is Eleanor. If she was chosen and managed to escape, Strahd has other plans. See the sidebar at the end of this adventure for more details.

Another letter on an arrow arrives, along with a reward of 25 gp per character. Read the following to the players:

*My loyal servants,
Well done! You made a good choice and distributed justice. Take this payment as thanks and as a hope that you will remain as loyal and entertaining in the future. Though your quarry escaped, you can be assured they will not long evade my hunters. They will be brought to swift justice!*
- Lord of Barovia, Strahd von Zarovich

ARREST THE PATSY TO EXECUTE THEM

Strahd intervenes at the last second. He appears before the characters. Read the following to the players:

Suddenly a powerful being is in your presence, appearing in a whirling cloud of bats. He says, "Wait my intrepid Adventurers, stay your hand. I must commend you on your work and your dedication to seeing justice done, even when the perpetrator is one of your own. But allow me to offer another solution. Van Yondu was obviously a terrible creature. A thief, a con man, a murderer."

He pauses to look around and nod at the people of Barovia, "I think we can say that in a way justice was done in his killing, whatever the motive. Perhaps this Adventurer can make up for this crime with future good deeds? I am a merciful ruler, just ask anyone."

He pauses again and looks around. The townsfolk in the area all nod slightly, heads downcast as if to avoid his gaze. Apparently satisfied and slightly amused, he continues. "I will allow this one to keep their life, just this once. Perhaps for such a gesture, you could all repay my kindness one day with some small task, nothing major, something trifle. Do not feel beholden to me of course. I am doing no more than any gracious ruler would do for those who had rendered such a service."

With that he smiles and disappears in a cloud of bats as he arrived! This was obviously Strahd himself, the man you now find yourself beholden to.

Where Strahd stood there is now a bag of holding. Inside they find a health potion for each player, a silvered weapon of the Dungeon Master's choice, and 50 gp each. This was the most entertaining outcome for Strahd by far.

ARREST THE PATSY AND IMPRISON / FREE THEM

Strahd is neither angry nor happy, the players receive the letter but no reward if they keep the killer in their group. If the player manages to convince them of either their innocence or makes up a story for why they killed them, they get inspiration.

Strahd sends another letter instead. Read the following to the players:

Adventurers,

Know that I am displeased that you did not follow my orders to the letter, though I must say I do like a little initiative every now and then. Be careful of trusting that one, the next dagger may be in one of your backs.

- Lord of Barovia, Strahd von Zarovich

THE PATSY ESCAPES

As with an escaping NPC, Strahd promises to chase them down. However he takes his time with this one and the players can meet up with their comrade if they are continuing with their adventures in Barovia. Perhaps he is hiding out in a building in town, or in the Church.

Another letter on an arrow arrives, along with a reward of 25 gp per character. Read the following to the players:

My loyal servants,

Well done! You made a good choice and distributed justice. Take this payment as thanks and as a hope that you will remain as loyal and entertaining in the future. Though our quarry escaped, you can be assured they will not long evade my hunters. They will be brought to swift justice!

- Lord of Barovia, Strahd von Zarovich



ELEANOR IS ACCUSED

If Eleanor is chosen and manages to escape, Strahd promises to hunt her down like the rest. However, he does not plan to kill her. Instead he will turn her into a child vampire.

He sees in her the same sort of sadistic personality that he sees in himself.

If you are continuing adventures in Ravenloft, she can be added in as an NPC for any later encounters. Her stats are that of a standard vampire, with the following changes.

- Her alignment is chaotic evil
- She wields a +1 Dagger, which she uses for her melee attacks

ROLEPLAYING ELEANOR

Eleanor is insane, a psychopath. In many ways she is much like Strahd. She will want to play with the characters, taunt them, tease them, and finally, when she gets bored, try to kill them.

She is not Strahd's puppet, so will not care what Strahd wants from them.

If she is attacked, she will use her dagger and try to stab the characters. Then she will smile wickedly and lick the blade clean.

NONE OF THE ABOVE

If the players do not go with any of the above choices, you will need to work out how entertained Strahd was. He will be entertained if:

- The Patsy is blamed
- There is a chase
- Someone is executed (except the patsy)

He will not be entertained if:

- The players refuse to choose a murderer
- The players let the murderer go
- The players allow the murderer to escape without pursuit.

For any other choices they make, use the following to work out how Strahd feels about it:

- Was it painful for the players or people of Barovia?
- Did it create fear and panic?
- Was it sadistic?
- Would it be amusing for a warped vampire?

As for rewards, choose what you think would work from the list above, or any other treasure of your choice.

WRAPPING UP THE ADVENTURE

Now that the choices are made, Ismark thanks the player's and bids them farewell or returns to his usual activities if the players are in *Curse of Strahd*. The other townsfolk, having witnessed the spectacle, go back to their dreary existence and constant fear. If the characters were 4th level or lower they may now progress to the next level.

If they came to Barovia from another Domain of Dread, read the following to the players:

You look around, wondering what to do now. As you do a mist springs up from nowhere. Quickly it envelops you. Within moments you find yourself back where you were before all of this started. Just before the mist dissipates entirely, you hear a voice on the wind:

"Adventurers, thank you for the entertainment. Be assured, I look forward to meeting you again in the future."

The voice then trails off into maniacal laughter before fading away ...

THOON & GLOOM

AN ADVENTURE FOR FOUR TO SIX CHARACTERS OF 12TH LEVEL

Written by Jack "IAmTheMooNow" Duncan



BLUETSPUR

The island of Bluetspur floats through the too-still seas of Ravenloft. The island is mountainous and barren, with many of the mountains forming impossible corkscrew shapes. The sun is forever blocked out by storm clouds on Bluetspur, and regular devastating lightning storms ensure that life on the island's surface is all but impossible.

The island's only permanent inhabitants, the illithids, dwell in colonies below the mountains, all slaves to the will of their dark master, an elder brain known as the God-Brain.

INTRODUCTION

In *Thoon and Gloom*, the characters are sent, or lured, to a new illithid colony run by the "Disciples", individuals who do not follow the God-Brain but instead worship a power they call Thoon.

This adventure is intended to fit a party of four to six characters of 12th level. But it could easily be adapted for characters of higher level by adding additional illithids in the combat encounters.

CONTENT WARNING

There are references to forced medical procedures and mind control within this adventure. Please speak with your players to ensure they are comfortable with these subjects before continuing.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

This adventure is based in Bluetspur, the island domain of the God-Brain in Ravenloft, and is centered around a group of newcomers to the island - the Disciples. These illithids are strangely religious, worshipping something they call Thoon.

What Thoon is, no one can say, but its effects are clear. The worship of Thoon spreads like a virus through intelligent creatures, with mind flayers particularly susceptible. All one needs to do is come into contact with Thoon religious iconography or hear the Disciples' strange psionic song. As such, the God-Brain cannot send his minions against them and has been forced to look for aid elsewhere. Illithids who worship Thoon are immediately disconnected from the God-Brain, instead linking to the Thoon elder-brain.

The Disciples have hollowed out the lower levels of Mt. Genchok, a mountain out in Bluetspur's badlands. From there they project their psionic "song" all across Bluetspur, threatening to usurp control of the island entirely.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Below are two different ways you can hook the characters into investigating the Disciples.

NEW MINIONS

The God-Brain reaches out to one of the characters in their dreams while they are on the material plane. It has selected the characters as useful new minions, who may be better able to resist Thoon's insidious grasp. It picks the party member with the lowest Wisdom score and casts *dominate monster* (DC 18) on that character by appearing to them in their dreams. If the character fails their saving throw, they awaken and begin silently performing a strange ritual over the course of the next five minutes, opening a one way portal to Bluetspur. They then call out to their fellows to follow and leap through the portal.

The characters arrive on the shores of Bluetspur. They each hear the same command in their head:

"FOLLOW THE SONG. SLAY THE BRAIN. THEN YOU MAY LEAVE."

Any further attempts at communication fail.

I LOVE YOU THOON

If the characters have already come to Bluetspur, they may be influenced by the song of Thoon. While the characters are travelling through Bluetspur, they hear the strange atonal song echoing through their minds. All the characters must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or begin worshipping Thoon. A character who worships Thoon will begin praising Thoon regularly and feel an irresistible urge to travel to Mt. Genchok.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This adventure consists of a long section of travel across the surface of Bluetspur, forcing the characters to take refuge in the island's monster infested caves.

Upon arriving at Mt. Genchok, the characters are greeted warmly by the Disciples. They will attempt to subtly influence the characters into worshipping Thoon through their strange symbols and iconography, even going so far as to spike their food.

Eventually the Disciples may attempt to extract quintessence from the characters, assuming they have any in their body.

The characters will need to feign friendliness, as the Disciples could overwhelm them easily if they are too direct, and force their way to the Thoon elder brain. There is even a faulty nautiloid beneath the colony, which the characters can use for a one way trip to a plane of their choice.

THOON AND GLOOM

In this description of the adventure, it is assumed that the party is composed of 12th-level adventurers and that they have already received the quest hook to investigate the Disciples.

THOON IS LOVE, THOON IS LIFE

Is Thoon a god? A philosophy? A way of life? None can say what Thoon is, least of all those who worship it.

The worship of Thoon is infectious, spread from person to person, creature to creature, like a memetic virus. Those who come to worship Thoon need not do so forever, and can break away if subjected to violent emotional stimuli (such as taking damage) and making a successful DC 15 Charisma saving throw against Thoon with advantage.

Psionic creatures, such as mind flayers, have no chance of resisting direct contact with Thoon worshippers, falling to it immediately. Through some unknown means, the worship of Thoon seems to aid scientists, leading them to startling insights and inventions.

Those who worship Thoon are driven to seek out quintessence, a mysterious substance present in about half of all living things (and normally undetectable) and conferring no effect on those who hold it. At the start of this adventure, have each character roll a d20. Anyone who rolls 10 or less is a source of quintessence. Creatures with quintessence in their bodies roll all saves against worshipping Thoon with disadvantage.

SUCH SWEET MUSIC

Tracking the Disciples is relatively easy for humanoids as Thoon's song can be heard by all those not connected to an elder brain within 10 miles of its source. If one of the characters has begun worshipping Thoon, they will be able to see Mt. Genchok clearly, even through the island's darkness and mists, as a sickly yellow glowing beacon in the distance. Otherwise the characters must walk the island's surface using their sense of sound alone to discern the correct direction to travel.

Reaching Mt. Genchok requires 10 hours of travel assuming the characters don't lose their way. At the start of every 2 hours of travel, have one of the characters roll a Wisdom (Perception) check. The initial DC for the first 2 hours of travel is 18, reducing by 1 for each hour closer to Bluetspur the characters are. On a success, the characters follow the music accurately, moving towards Mt. Genchok directly. If the characters fail by 3 or less, they still make progress but only 1 hour's worth for their 2 hours of travel. A failure of 4 or more sees the characters wandering in circles for the 2 hours, failing to make any progress at all.

DANGERS OF THE SURFACE

There is a reason the illithids of Bluetspur live underground. The island is covered in a perpetual layer of roiling storm clouds that block out the sun, but it still has a "day" and "night" cycle which is referred to as such by the local illithids. During the "day", the sky is lit by constant lightning flashes, casting the whole surface in a blue-white light, as bright as daylight.

Creatures out on the surface during the "day" must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw at the start of each of their turns, taking 4d8 lightning damage on a failure. Characters will receive half an hour's warning that "day" is approaching if they are caught out on the surface, as the sky begins to crackle with lightning half an hour before the lightning strikes begin.

Characters forced to travel during the "day" will need to take shelter to survive. Fortunately there are many caves scattered about Bluetspur's mountainous landscape, unfortunately these caves are also sometimes the homes of the island's more dangerous inhabitants. When the characters approach a cave, you can use the following tables to generate the cave and its inhabitants at random or choose from the options.



CAVE FEATURES

1d8 Feature

- 1 The cave's surface is littered with skeletons, each with a small puncture through the cranium.
- 2 The cave's interior is structured in a strange corkscrew-like fashion, like the interior of a bolt or screw, yet the formation appears to be natural.
- 3 A robed statue stands upon a plinth at the center of the cave, its facial features and protruding hands eroded away by time and the elements.
- 4 Fresh blood pools at the center of the cave's floor. If there was a corpse, it has since been moved.
- 5 This cave's entrance has a thick layer of stalactites and stalagmites, leaving only a few feet through which creatures may enter. They look unnervingly like teeth and the interior of the cave is muggy and humid.
- 6 The cave smells of old bodies and decay, but appears clean of any such rot when searched.
- 7 A large twisted crystal hovers at the center of this cave, pulsing at random intervals with a dim purple light. Close inspection reveals a skull at the crystal's center, its eye sockets each filled with a gemstone. Most attempts to move the crystal or damage it fail. Striking it with a +3 weapon or the disintegrate spell destroys the crystal, releasing the hostile and insane **demilich** trapped within.
- 8 Any stalactites or stalagmites in this cave resemble tentacles, complete with suckers along the interior.

CAVE INHABITANTS

1d20 Inhabitant

- 1-5 Uninhabited
- 6-7 A **cloak**
- 8-10 1d8 **gibbering mouther**s
- 11 An insane male human **mage**, who speaks only in gibberish and a **gray slaad** shape-changed into a human male, acting as the mage's bodyguard. The mage holds the slaad's control gem.
- 12 1d4 feral, blood starved **vampire spawn**, once servants of Lyssa Von Zarovich.
- 13-15 A tomb containing an embalmed body of a Thoon worshiping mind flayer in elaborate robes on a stone slab. The body is inanimate unless physically interacted with, in which case it rises as a **mummy lord**, without the Rejuvenation trait.
- 16 1d4 **trolls**, fighting each other over a scrap of rotten meat.
- 17 1d6 **otyughs** feasting on a pile of refuse from a nearby illithid settlement.
- 18 A single **nothic** reading a tattered ancient scroll. It is not hostile unless the characters try to read the scroll.
- 19 1d4 **ropers**, lying in wait.
- 20 A **behir** if entered at "night", empty during the "day". If the characters are in the cave for more than an hour after "day" ends, the behir returns.

MT. GENCHOK

Mt. Genchok is a twin-peak mountain rising slightly above the others in its range. Several lighting rods have been placed at different points along the peaks. These rods are constantly struck by lightning during the "day", making it safe to travel around the outside of the mountain during the "day" within 100 ft.

G1. COURTYARD

Two large wooden doors, carved in the image of a mind flayer with its arms raised to the sky, lead from the exterior to the courtyard. The walls are painted a sickly yellow. To those who worship Thoon, the walls seem to glow. The floor is half covered in an incomplete mosaic of strange asymmetrical symbols, when completed it will cover the entire floor. At most times there are 1d6 **commoners** and 1d4 **mind flayers** working to complete the mosaic. The symbols are meaningless, but any creature who inspects the runes closely (for example, to try and discern their purpose) must succeed on a DC 14 Charisma saving throw or begin worshipping Thoon. Doors from the courtyard lead to G2, G3, G4 and the stairway to the 2nd and 3rd floors.

G2. NAUTILOID

A thick locked metal door blocks the stairs down to this chamber. It requires a successful DC 22 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check to pick or a DC 30 Strength (Athletics) check to force.

The metal door has an AC 19, 25 hit points, a Damage Threshold of 10, is resistant to bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from non-magical attacks, and immune to poison and psychic damage.

This chamber is a bare natural cave, containing only a small illithid nautiloid, a strange form of interplanar transport resembling a group of twitching tentacles protruding from a snail-like shell. The nautiloid can only fit two Large creatures or eight Medium.

If a character enters the nautiloid and succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check, they can discern how to activate the nautiloid. It was damaged when it landed in Bluetspur so it can no longer fly. It can plane shift, but will break and become non-magical after one use. It is also unfueled, needing a vial of quintessence to fuel its plane shift.

If one of the characters attempts to enter the nautiloid before slaying the Thoon elder brain, they hear a loud echoing voice in their head screaming "NO", and must make a DC 20 Intelligence saving throw or take 8d8 psychic damage, taking half as much on a success. On a failure or success, the character so affected is gripped with a certainty that they cannot use the nautiloid until they slay the Thoon elder brain. This message comes from the dark lord God-Brain. There are never any creatures in this chamber.

G3. CHAPEL

An open pair of wooden doors lead from Area G1 to this chamber. This chamber is the most elaborately decorated of all within the mountain. Fine sculptures of illithids line the walls, and the floor is painted that same sickly yellow as G1. A large formless sculpture dominates the center of the chamber, seeming to be a different shape from every angle.

Once a day, just before "night", all 18 mind flayers and 25 commoners who live in the mountain worship Thoon silently in this chapel. Most sitting silently in a circle around the sculpture, some weeping or laughing hysterically. Characters who worship Thoon feel compelled to join in this worship. Characters who don't worship Thoon who join in the ritual, must succeed on a DC 18 Charisma saving throw or begin worshipping Thoon. The whole ritual takes fifteen minutes.

G4. CHAMBER OF TRANSFORMATION

A locked pair of wooden doors lead from Area G1 to this chamber. They require a successful DC 18 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check to pick or a DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check to force open. The doors have an AC 15, 20 hit points, and a Damage Threshold of 5.

This chamber contains a single pool of greasy water, filled from a constant drip from a hole in the ceiling above. A creature who worships Thoon who bathes in and drinks this water is transformed forever. They retain their personality and alignment, but their worship of Thoon is now eternal and unbreakable. Nothing, save a *wish* spell, can undo this transformation. Characters who worship Thoon are taken down to this chamber only if they contain no quintessence. They are taken only after spending a "night" within Mt. Genchok.

G5. GALLEY

The galley contains a small stove, manned at all times by Cephumok, an affable **mind flayer** who eagerly attempts to prepare whatever food the characters ask for. A long table lies at the center of the chamber, with 1d4 **commoners** eating at the table at any time.

Cephumok spikes the food of any characters who reveal to him that they don't worship Thoon with quintessence. A character who consumes this food must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or have disadvantage on all saves against worshipping Thoon for 24 hours.

G6. SLEEPING CHAMBERS

This chamber contains 30 bunk beds pushed close to one another. A secret door, requiring a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check to spot, leads to Area G7.

G7. QUINTESSENCE EXTRACTION CHAMBER

The walls and floor of this chamber are lined with steel. Two **mind flayer arcanists** work in this room at all times, performing experiments on various corpses.



One of the arcanists wields a laser rifle, which uses vials of quintessence as ammo. The laser rifle is incredibly unstable, and has a 10% chance of exploding each time it is fired, dealing 3d8 radiant damage to the wielder.

Each of the arcanists hold keys to all the doors in the mountain. A **flesh golem** acts as their assistant. This particular golem has the head of a mindflayer and several seemingly random humanoid body parts embedded in its torso. 6 metal beds lie at the center of the chamber, arranged in a circle around a vat of viscous sticky yellow liquid quintessence. Syringes are arranged around these beds, attached to tubes leading to the vat. The chamber also contains 40 vials of quintessence.

G8. GUARD CHAMBER

A thick locked metal door blocks the stairs down to this chamber. It requires a successful DC 22 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check to pick or a DC 30 Strength (Athletics) check to force open. It has an AC 19, 25 hit points, a Damage Threshold of 10, is resistant to bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from non-magical attacks, and immune to poison and psychic damage.

Guarding this chamber are four **mind flayers** and six **intellect devourers**. A locked door, identical to the one leading into this chamber, blocks the short corridor between G8 and G9.

G9. ELDER BRAIN'S CHAMBER

A thick locked metal door blocks the stairs down to this chamber. It requires a successful DC 22 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check to pick or a DC 30 Strength (Athletics) check to force open. It has an AC 19, 25 hit points, a Damage Threshold of 10, is resistant to bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from non-magical attacks, and immune to poison and psychic damage.

This chamber is directly above Area G4, and the water in Area G4 drips down from the waist deep pool of water, 20 ft. in diameter, at the center of this chamber. The Thoon **elder brain** rests in this chamber, its form massaged by several **commoners** at all times.

The chamber also contains the colony's collected wealth within a portable hole held by one of the commoners: 1,738 gp, 821 sp, and 224 cp.

ORDER OF EVENTS

When the characters arrive at Mt. Genchok, they are greeted by Luawa (female dwarf **priest**). She greets them in the name of holy Thoon, and offers them refuge for the night. If any of the characters reveal that they also worship Thoon, Luawa is delighted, praising Thoon for bringing them together. Due to her connection to Thoon, Luawa immediately knows if a character is lying about worshipping Thoon. She calmly informs a lying character that there is no need to pledge false faith, all are welcome beneath Thoon's eternal light.

MEETING THE LOCALS

If the characters remain friendly, Luawa shows them around the mountain, except for Areas G3, G4, G7, G8 and G9. The other people the characters pass, including the mind flayers, are extremely friendly towards the characters, wishing them a "glorious day within Thoon's sight."

THE HARVEST

If the characters agree to spend the night, and any of them contain quintessence, they awaken in Area G7, strapped to one of the metal tables. The moment the syringes touch them, characters who worship Thoon lose that trait as the sheer panic of the moment overrides its influence. The needles deal 1 piercing damage and begin draining a character's quintessence.

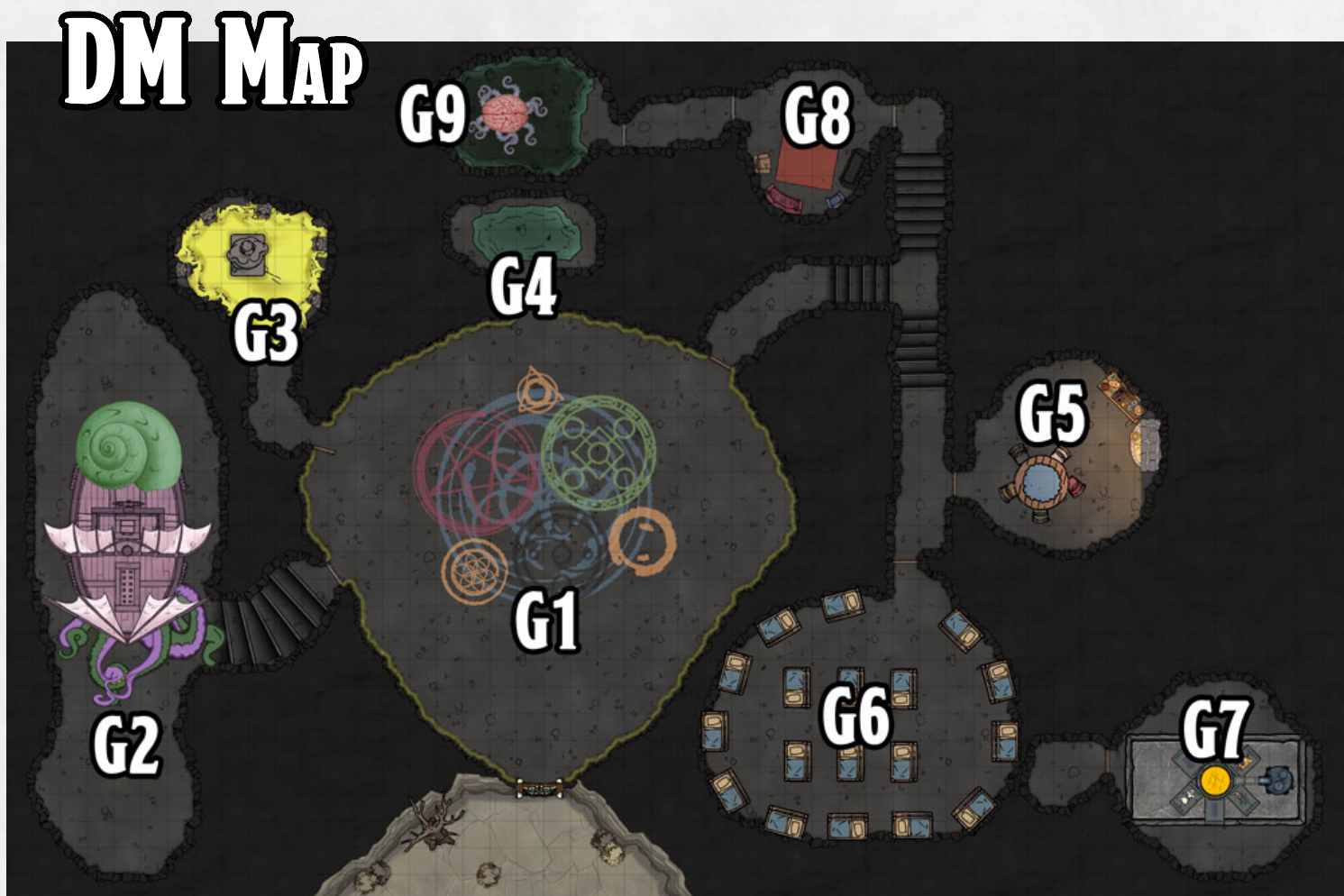
A character has 5 rounds to escape the restraints before they are drained of their quintessence, requiring a DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check to break. If the characters have displayed magical abilities in the mountain, they are also gagged, otherwise no attempt is made to prevent them from casting spells. Although quintessence has no purpose in the body, the process of removing it is fatal.

UNEXPECTED AID

If the characters are caught breaking into a sealed off chamber or escape Area G7, all characters in the mountain become hostile towards them. However, the God-Brain intervenes, exerting its psionic might on the Thoon elder brain, preventing it from alerting its servants to anything more than a vague threat, preventing all the illithids descending on the characters at once.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the characters made a deal with the God-Brain to slay the Thoon elder brain, the God-Brain does nothing to aid them. If they return to an illithid colony, the illithids attack and attempt to take the characters as chattel. The God-Brain will not stop the characters using the nautiloid if they wish, as it has its own means of moving its servants from place to place, even if it cannot travel itself.



THE ORB OF BALOK

AN ADVENTURE FOR FOUR TO SIX CHARACTERS OF 7TH LEVEL IN THE DREAD DOMAIN OF FALKOVNIA

Written by Aaron "VeX" Gentry



FALKOVNIA



uled by the domain lord Ladesca Drakov, the dread domain of Falkovnia is in turmoil. Zombies of all shapes and sizes roam the forested and swampy lands of Falkovnia. But Lady Ladesca Drakov has use for adventurers that find their way into her domain of dread.

INTRODUCTION

In the *The Orb of Balok*, the characters are escorted to see the leader of Falkovnia, Ladesca Drakov. Ladesca rules the land with a firm hand. She gives the able adventurers an ultimatum: Retrieve an artifact from an abandoned fortress so she might end the zombie outbreak in Falkovnia, or be turned away from every safe haven in the land, doomed to die at the hands of the zombie hordes or to exposure in the harsh winter.

This adventure is intended to fit a party of four to six characters of 7th level. But it could easily be adapted for characters of higher level by adding additional zombies in the combat encounters.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

This adventure is based in Falkovnia, one of the domains of dread in the realm of Ravenloft. Vlad Drakov, the former vampiric dread lord of the domain of Falkovnia was a cruel and vicious warlord who tortured and killed not only his enemies, but random Falkovnians as well.

The people of the land believe for every person murdered in Falkovnia, a tree dies, explaining why the forests are slowly becoming full of dead trees. When Vlad ordered the invasion of another domain of dread, he took no captives, instead impaling all those who stood before his army on pikes, trees, and all manner of poles driven into the ground of the dread domain of Darkon. But the impaled bodies began to move and wriggle themselves free, and soon the army of Vlad Drakov began to flee back to Falkovnia, pursued by a horde of the undead zombies.

Now, it is not known what befell Vlad "the Impaler" Drakov, but a new Drakov is the domain lord of Falkovnia, Ladesca Drakov. Ladesca may, in fact, be responsible for the zombie outbreak somehow. But she barely holds control of the land of Falkovnia now and has no intention of giving it up without a hard fight through the long undead winter.

Ladesca organized the defense of all the villages and towns of Falkovnia, ordering many outlying villages abandoned and putting the refugees to work building strong tall walls around the remaining areas. Adventuring visitors to Falkovnia are immediately brought before Ladesca Drakov and offered a choice—work for her, or be refused at any town or village in the land and fend for themselves in the cold lands filled with zombies.

When the adventurers first come into the town of Lekar, the strongest and largest remaining living town in Falkovnia, Ladesca has a job for the adventurers. She wants them to travel outside Lekar and visit the ruins of the Fortress of Balok. Balok was once a stronghold of Vlad Drakov and a training center for his troops. Now it is filled with undead.

Ladesca's research has revealed rumors that the magical artifact Vlad used to open a portal from Falkovnia to Darkon was kept in a vault beneath the fortress. Ladesca wants the adventurers to retrieve that artifact, an orb called the *Orb of Balok*, and return it to her so that she might stop the zombie apocalypse in Falkovnia.

At least, that is what Ladesca tells the adventurers. Actually, Ladesca has learned a bit of lore about the artifact below the fortress of Balok. Ladesca read in an obscure old text that the *Orb of Balok* was the reason the fortress was initially built hundreds of years ago, not to protect the orb, but to protect the land of Falkovnia from the dangerous artifact. Ladesca Drakov's research has led her to believe the orb may be the culprit behind the zombie outbreak. Vlad may have somehow used the connection of the orb to the dark ones and the very core of the domains of dread to open the portal to Darkon. However, she believes the orb's true nature may allow her to control the army of the undead, giving her truly untold power among the dread lords of Ravenloft.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Below are two different ways you can hook the characters into searching for the *Orb of Balok*.

NEWCOMERS

If the characters are newcomers to Falkovnia, the first forces of Ladesca Drakov, the dread lord of this domain, will escort them to the town of Lekar where Ladesca rules from.

RACE FOR THE ORB

Instead of hunting the orb for Ladesca Drakov, perhaps the characters are instead racing to find the orb before she does. It's possible the characters have gathered the same information Ladesca has and believe that whoever controls the *Orb of Balok* can control the undead hordes of Falkovnia.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The majority of this adventure is a dungeon crawl through the vaults below the ruins of the Fortress of Balok. There are several groups of shambling zombies standing between the adventurers and the vault containing the *Orb of Balok*. But the biggest challenge the adventurers face is a rival group of adventurers also hunting for the artifact.

If the characters are working for Ladesca, these adventurers are a group racing to keep the orb out of Ladesca's hands. On the other hand, if the characters are the ones trying to keep the orb from Ladesca, then the rivals are working for the dread lord.

THE FORTRESS OF BALOK

In this description of the adventure, it is assumed that the party is composed of 7th level adventurers who have already received the quest hook to investigate the ruins of the Fortress of Balok in search of the orb.

It has been several years since anyone living has inhabited the fortress. Now, it is home to an army of the undead. The walls and buildings of the site were destroyed during the evacuation of the fortress. Now, only rubble remains.

The characters should be able to search the site and find one of the two entrances to the vaults. The DM Map provided and the associated descriptions of areas below add additional information and should lead the players to find the tunnels leading to the vault.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

To create a sense of urgency and tension, you may add random encounters with undead when the characters are exploring the surface area of the map. Use the Random Undead Encounters Table below to generate a random encounter.

For high-tension, you can roll on the table once every few minutes of real-time the characters spend exploring the surface. For lower-tension games, you might simply roll on the table when the characters rest or seem aimless. You should roll on the table at least once or twice when the characters enter the rooms of the fortress.

RANDOM UNDEAD ENCOUNTERS

1d20	Encounter
1-10	8 skeletons
11-14	6 ghouls
15-17	4 ogre zombies
18-19	6 ghosts
20	3 flameskulls

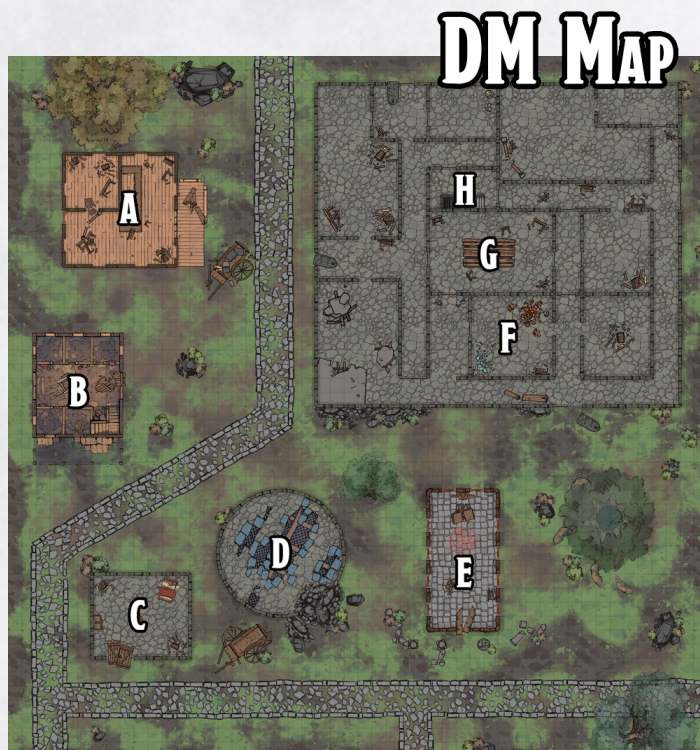
AREA A: DECAYING TAVERN

This former tavern served to provide food and drink to those who lived and worked in the area of the fortress. Now, it only is host to a small horde of twenty **zombies**.

When the players first enter the area, read the following description:

This tavern built of wood has seen far better days. The roof is sagging, the windows have been boarded closed, and there are signs of damage everywhere. The air inside smells of decay, and dozens of humanoid shapes shuffle around in the main room of the tavern.

These zombies gather here as if they remember the old days—when they would come here for refreshments and companionship. Now, they shuffle about aimlessly, but a small part of them must remember this building with fondness.



AREA B: STABLES

Built sturdily, these stables remain in fairly good condition both outside and in, although the piles of hay are riddled with mold. Inside the stables, the player characters will encounter five **zombie horses**.

When the players first enter the area, read the following description:

This stable smells of death and mold. The sturdy thick beams used to build this large barn have held up, despite the signs of a struggle. The hay on the floors and stacked alongside the building have turned into a muck of rot and mud.

Snorting and shuffling in the dark stables, five horses, their flesh torn and rotting on their bodies, turn hungrily towards you.

AREA C: GUEST QUARTERS

This large single room built of stone has been looted and is abandoned. The stone tile roof still stands and the doors may be knocked off their hinges, but the room could be blockaded as a safe place for the characters to rest.



AREA D: COLLAPSED TOWER

Very little remains of this tower. Once, it was over thirty feet high. Now, the walls only reach a dozen feet high in the largest section and most of the tower lies in rubble. Even the floor inside is treacherous as large sections have broken away to the area below.

When the players first enter the area, read the following description:

Once, this tower was tall and sturdy, but now it is little more than a pile of rubble with some of the walls still remaining. From gaps in the walls and through arrow slits that still remain, glimpses of the inside of the tower reveal there was or is some sort of level beneath the tower, but even the flooring inside looks unsafe.

The lower level of this tower was once connected to the vault tunnels beneath the surface. But the collapse of the tower has completely blocked or destroyed the tunnels beneath the tower.

AREA E: EMPTY CHAPEL

This chapel was once dedicated to the worship of Vlad Drakov, but now it is the home to two abandoned vampire spawn. The vampire who created them abandoned them months ago to find a better feeding ground. There is a hidden entrance to the vault tunnels beneath the broken altar.

When the players first enter the area, read the following description:

Entering this abandoned chapel, your eyes are immediately drawn to the beautiful stained glass windows. Each of which seems to tell a different part the story of one man.

In the first window, the man appears to be a military leader, raising armies and leading them into battle. In the second, the same man is ordering the bodies of enemies impaled on pikes. In the next window, the man and his men are fleeing from the dead as they pull themselves off the pikes. Then the man and his army are pictured in a window stepping through a misty portal and appear to be in a different realm.

The windows story appears to jump from one of the long walls to the other long wall, and the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth windows depict the man taking up rulership of the new land, building fortresses, cities, farmlands, and roads.

The last two windows at the far end of the chapel depict the man, standing alone in front of a blood-red moon. Between the two windows is a wooden statue of the man. On the wall above the statue is carved: *All Praise His Name, Vlad Drakov.*

Disturbing your viewing of the stained-glass windows, two figures rise from the shadows of the far end of the chapel, their gaunt faces featuring fanged mouths and hissing mania reveals them to be some form of vampire.

Two starving **vampire spawn** attack the characters, mindless from extreme blood thirst.

If the two vampire spawn weren't starving, they might possibly be reasoned with, but they are so mad with thirst for blood, there is no parlay to be had.

If the players ask to search the chapel, a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check will reveal the hidden trap door beneath the altar which leads to the vault tunnels beneath the surface.

AREA F: STORAGE ROOM

The walls of this room were once lined with shelves filled with boxes, crates, sacks, and pottery, all used to store all manner of items for the fortress.

When the players first enter the area, read the following description:

This room was obviously once a storage room, but the shelves are empty and most of the pottery used for storage is smashed into pieces on the floor.

If the players take the time to search the room, a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check will find *Drakov's Silvered Whip* buried beneath some rubble.

DRAKOV'S SILVERED WHIP

Weapon, very rare

This 15ft. long +2 silvered whip was created by an artificer as a gift for Vlad Drakov. The whip is made of woven strips of a mithral-silver alloy that makes it both strong and light. The whip is enchanted with the *thorn whip* cantrip.

While wielding this whip you deal 2d6 piercing damage on a hit and if the creature is Large or smaller, you can choose to pull the creature up to 10 feet closer to you.



AREA G: MAP ROOM

This room once served as a place for soldiers to plan battles and strategize. The large table in the center of the room was used to lay out maps and markers for unit movements and planning.

When the players first enter the area, read the following description:

There is a large table in the center of this room, though it appears to have been damaged. A pile of boards and paper in the corner appears to have once been a set of shelves containing maps. A scattering of figurines across the floor, some broken, others in better condition, seem to indicate this room was some sort of map room or perhaps a room used to plan battles as most of the figurines seem to represent different types of military units.

AREA H: STAIRS

These stairs lead down to the northern entrance of the vault tunnels.

When the players first enter the area, read the following description:

This room contains little more than a set of stairs leading down beneath the fortress. Unlike this dark room in the fortress ruins, there appears to be some faint light coming from below.

THE FORTRESS VAULT

The vault beneath the fortress was designed to protect the Orb of Balok. Most of the soldiers of the fortress were evacuated before the fortress fell to undead forces, but the vault was protected until the bitter end. Those soldiers who fell guarding the vault now haunt the two entrances to the vault.

The DM Map provided and the associated descriptions of areas below add additional information about the areas of the vault tunnels.

AREAS A & B: ENTRANCES

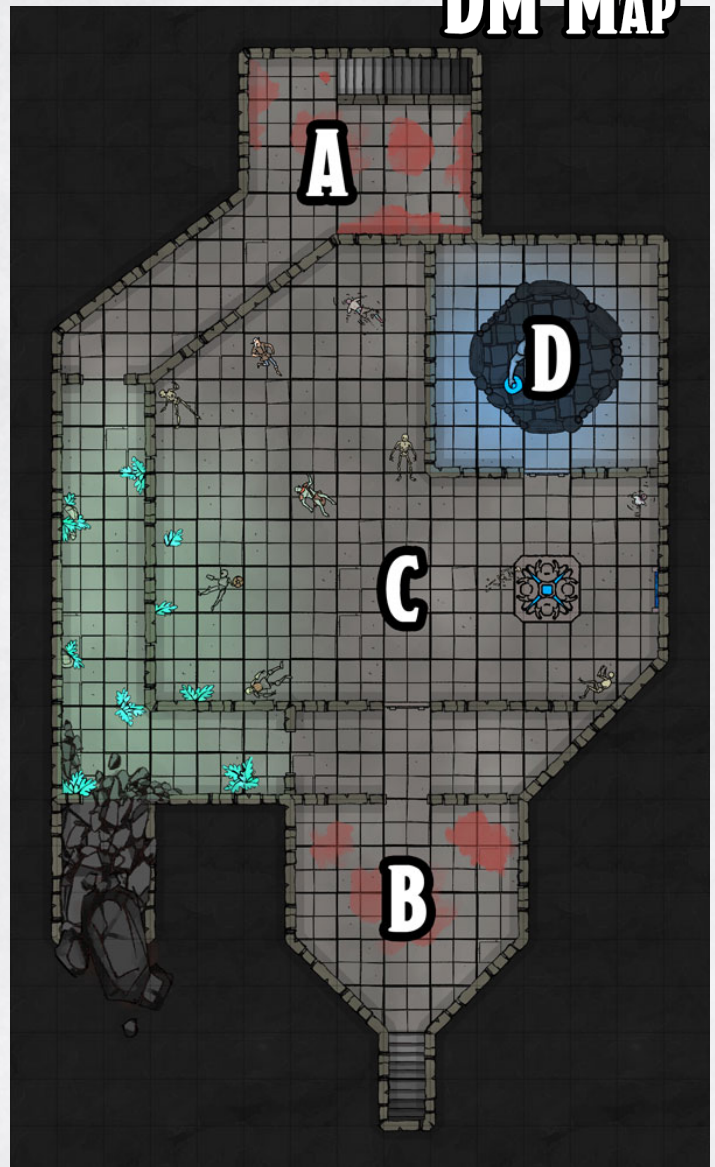
The two entrance areas of the vault are still guarded, though the living guards have been killed, the power of the orb has twisted their undead bodies into demonic zombies, still bound to guard the entrances to the vault.

Three **demon zombies** guard the main entrance, Area A, while two more guard the secret entrance, Area B. During the first round of combat with either group, the demon zombies will unleash an "inhuman scream" which calls the other demon zombies from the other area to come running to join combat.

AREA C: VAULT ANTECHAMBER

The vault protects the Orb of Balok with a sort of puzzle trap inside the Vault Antechamber. The first clue to this trap is on the outside of the door leading into the antechamber.

DM Map



When the characters first examine the door leading into Area C, read the following description:

This door appears to be made of solid iron. It is devoid of any markings, hinges, or handle, except for what appears to be the impression of a human handprint in the center of the door, roughly four feet from the floor.

The door can be opened simply by any living creature placing their hand on the handprint. When one of the characters does this, read the following description:

As you place your hand upon the door, it hums with energy for a few moments, then begins to slide open, the door recessing into the wall.

Beyond the door, you see a room, thickly covered with dust. There are several skeletal bodies scattered throughout the room. To the right of the doorway, you see a glowing ornate pedestal with another recessed handprint in the top situated in front of another iron door, upon the door written in Common it reads:

*Entry is within your Grasp
the Hand of your faith must only Persist*

Further beyond the pedestal is a mosaic made primarily of blue stones. The mosaic is an intricate depiction of this room and what appears to be an explosion of energy bursting out from the pedestal, killing the people standing in the room.

The mosaic warning is a lie. The message on the door is the real way to open the door. When a living creature puts their hand on the recessed handprint on the pedestal, a pulse of necrotic energy heals undead and damages the living. This necrotic pulse then continues at the start of every round. If a character holds their hand on the pedestal for ten straight rounds, the door to the inner vault opens.

To further emphasize the lie, a booming magical voice counts down each round when the necrotic energy pulses. Additionally, you can tell the players that the noise of the building energy within the pedestal is getting louder and louder each round.

When a character touches the pedestal for the first time read the following description:

As you put your hand on the pedestal, energy within the pedestal begins to thrum and build towards something. A booming voice comes out of nowhere and begins counting down slowly from ten.

As all this happens, an invisible pulse of necrotic energy emanates from the pedestal throughout the room, the skeletal remains on the floor of the room begin to stir, rising from the ground into a standing skeletal figure.

Ten **skeletal defenders** stand up and attack the characters.

PEDESTAL PULSE

At the start of every round, including the first round, the pedestal pulses the room with necrotic energy. On the first round, this "awakens" the skeletal defenders and does damage to any living creatures susceptible to necrotic damage.

On each subsequent round, the skeletal defenders are healed for 3d6 hit points from this pulse, while all living creatures in the room take 3d6 necrotic damage.

If the characters take their hand off the pedestal at any time, when the countdown reaches the end of ten rounds, the skeletal defenders collapse back to death and the process must be restarted.

AREA D: THE VAULT

Inside the vault, the *Orb of Balok* rests in the hand of a statue of Vlad Drakov. There are no further traps or protections preventing a character from obtaining the orb at this point.

As the Dungeon Master, you can choose what the orb does. Perhaps it is a legendary artifact capable of allowing the attuned character to control all undead in Falkovnia as Ladesca Drakov believes. Perhaps it does something else.

LEAVING THE VAULT

Whether the characters choose to return the orb to Ladesca or keep it for themselves, another group of adventurers awaits them on the surface outside the fortress. You can use the same outside map as before for an encounter map, if needed.

When the characters leave the fortress, read the following description to them:

As you come out of the fortress, you see four humanoid figures that appear to be waiting for you. One, dressed in full plate, calls out, "We'll be taking that orb now, thank you."

This group of four adventurers includes a **crusader**, a **desert barbarian**, an **eldritch warrior**, and a **vampire hunter**. They will fight for the orb if necessary, but they will also return the orb to Ladesca for the characters, if the players wish. But these adventurers will take credit for returning the orb, leaving out the characters' contribution of retrieving the orb when they return it to Ladesca.

WRAPPING UP THE ADVENTURE

The DM can decide much of the outcome of this adventure, allowing it to more seamlessly fit into their own campaign. Perhaps they will have more dealings with Ladesca, or perhaps they can use the orb to return to another domain.



THE DESERTS OF HAR'AKIR

AN ADVENTURE FOR FOUR TO SIX CHARACTERS OF 8TH TO 10TH LEVEL

Written by B.J. "professorbeej" Keeton



Bob Carpenter

HAR'AKIR

Har'Akir is a domain of oppressive heat, harsh winds, vicious monsters, and nearly unbreakable people. The dark lord Ankhtepot, cursed with immortality, has been entombed beneath the sands for centuries. Ankhtepot is awakening from a long slumber, and the denizens of Har'Akir can feel it. And they claim they want no part of it.

INTRODUCTION

Rumors of the barrier to Har'Akir weakening in spots have made their way to Muhar, and the arrival of the outsiders (the PC's adventuring party) validate these claims.

Fearing the weakening barrier indicates dark lord Ankhtepot is reawakening to begin another reign of terror, the priests of the Morninglord actively seek a powerful object that will seal him away for centuries more.

CONTENT WARNING

Traditionally, published versions of Har'Akir have included slavery, indicating that it is "an accepted institution" therein and commonly used as a punishment for criminals. I have done my best to avoid any such content, however. Note that if you look into previous iterations of the domain of Har'Akir and the Amber Wastes, you will find many references to slavery, however.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

This adventure takes place in the domain of dread, Har'Akir. Har'Akir is primarily desert with a few rocky spots and hills, with mountains bordering to the east.

Water is, of course, a scarce resource, and the only potable source is from the oasis of Muhar. It is no surprise, then, that Muhar is the only true settlement in Har'Akir, though small encampments do pop up. These are mostly populated by brigands, treasure seekers, and various groups that would not tolerate the more social and settled life within Muhar. As much as any life in Har'Akir can be considered settled.

For the most part, the dark lord Ankhtepot has very little impact on the domain of Har'Akir. He is cursed to immortality, but was entombed and sealed away by his own priests and worshippers. He has, in the past, broken free of his entombment, awakening from his forced slumber, bringing death and destruction and horror down on the land.

Before his last sealing away, Ankhtepot raised the barriers to Har'Akir, turning anyone who tried to enter or leave his domain to ash. However, rumors of the barrier weakening in spots have made their way to Muhar, and priests of the Mother Night have said this means that the dark lord is once again rising and wants to speed up the process. Priests of the Morninglord, however, do not want this reawakening to occur and work toward preventing it.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Below are two different ways you can hook the characters into investigating the deserts of Har'Akir.

TOMB RAIDERS

While exploring a cave or other kind of subterranean structure, the characters find a corridor leading into pitch blackness. The walls match their current location, however, as they move deeper, the floors, walls, and ceiling begin to transition into a golden-tan sandstone.

Mist begins to gather at their feet, swirling. It grows thicker and rises higher with every step they take. Eventually, a light can be seen through the mist and the dank cold of wherever they had been is replaced by an intense, dry heat.

The mist dissipates as the floor ramps upward. The sandstone walls are decorated with hieroglyphs and murals. Blue sky can be seen through an opening ahead, and when they make their way out of the corridor, they stand in the middle of the Har'Akir desert.

Once out, the corridor disappears. The sands stretch for miles, and they can just make out what looks to be a palm tree near the horizon. Or it could just be a mirage. In reality, it is the Muhar oasis seen from a vast distance.

DIVINE INTERVENTION

A faithful or divinely connected member of the adventuring party has a vision of a weathered-looking man in white robes standing on a dune in a vast desert. The man holds a scroll open that a woman reads in an unfamiliar language (*Akiri*). She gestures wildly with her hands, and mist begins to encircle the duo, settling into a swirling disc around their feet. The vision ends with a flash of an ornate sarcophagus being thrown open and a linen-wrapped figure enveloped in eldritch energy steps forward from the upright tomb.

The adventurer returns to consciousness, and the misty disc has manifested near the party. Any character who steps onto the disc immediately fades away and reappears in Har'Akir next to the two priests from the vision. When the whole party is through, one of the priests says, "Thank you, Morninglord, for bringing us Ankhtepot's bane."

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This adventure consists of some trekking through the desert, survival in the desert, and three dungeon crawls into tombs that may contain the *Binding Chain of Dread*, an object that will prevent the Ankhtepot from reawakening.

The deserts of Har'Akir are littered with forgotten tombs. It is impossible to know where the item is hidden, but the priests have narrowed it down to three locations.

Not only are tombs in Har'Akir likely trapped and cursed, the followers of Mother Night work to prevent anyone else from attaining it. The party will encounter two devout enforcers working to ensure Ankhtepot's emergence. The party will have the choice of which god to follow to find the *Binding Chain of Dread*.

THE DESERTS OF HAR'AKIR

Regardless of which adventure hook you chose, the party should have made their way to the Muhar oasis, either on their own or led by the Morninglord's clerics.

SHINING, SHIMMERING, NOT-SO-SPLENDID

The oasis of Muhar is as different from the rest of Har'Akir as it could be. A cool breeze blows through the village, off the large body of water in the center. Buildings are made of sandstone and white, sun-hardened mud. Palm trees grow in various places, mostly alongside the water, but some near buildings or walls. The atmosphere of the oasis, however, has an intangible aura of dread that contrasts the almost-idyllic visuals.

The village bustles with people, lots of them gathering water, but others doing business and trading. No one seems to be using any currency, but the players can see barterers going on everywhere. The people look worn and weathered with tough, leathery skin as would be expected of desert dwellers.

The villagers do not appear to be unhappy, but they do not seem to be outwardly happy, either. It is obvious to any who look, these are people who do what they must to survive, and they simply exist in this environment, not flourish.

If the players arrived through *Divine Intervention*, the priests will escort them to Muhar and then the following scene will occur. If they arrive by *Tomb Raiders*, the same two priests will be notified by a villager, strangers are in the village and come promptly to meet them. Read the following to the players:

The priests who approach introduce themselves. The man is named Sayid and the woman is named Tasia.

"The Morninglord has surely shined on us," Tasia says, "and answered our prayers against Ankhtepot's return." She clasps her hands in front of her as she stops directly in front of you. "Welcome to Muhar."

Then, she and Sayid eye each of you up and down. They both smile. "Yes," Sayid says, "Perhaps he has." Sayid looks around the area, as though he is on the lookout for someone. "We should get inside, follow us."

The duo turns around and moves toward the interior of the village. The party can see them enter an alley between two buildings, disappearing from sight.

THE MORNINGLORD VS MOTHER NIGHT

Should the party follow the priests immediately, they will see Tasia and Sayid enter a building with large, wooden doors and a round, golden emblem above its door. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check will allow the characters to see similarities with it and the symbol of Lathander from Faerûn. A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check will connect Lathander with the Morninglord, if a roll is necessary.

Across the street from the church of the Morninglord is a similar building with a dark emblem above the door, a black circle wreathed in purple flames.

A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check allows the characters to recognise the symbol of Shar, though the party would have most likely not encountered Mother Night or her followers yet, so they would not be able to connect her to Shar or the symbol.

Should the party try to enter Mother Night's church, they find the doors and windows barred and locked, as her priests and followers are most active between dusk and dawn. The doors should unlock once night falls.

If the party chooses to enter the Morninglord's church, following Tasia and Sayid, the door opens without issue. Read the following to the players:

The interior of the church is small, a few benches line the walls, faded tapestries with the same symbol as above the door adorn the walls. Tasia and Sayid stand at an altar near the far wall, looking over a map spread across the surface.

Sayid looks up at you as the door closes behind you. "Welcome to the Morninglord's house," he says. "Please come closer. I fear we do not have much time left."

Tasia is digging around beneath that altar and pulls out three clay figures. She carefully places them in specific places on the map.

Tasia and Sayid are able to offer the following information if questioned or engaged in conversation.

TASIA AND SAYID: WHAT THEY KNOW

- The dark lord Ankhtepot was cursed with immortality, and his priests mummified and entombed him at Pharaoh's Rest northwest of Muhar.
- The weakening of the barriers at Har'Akir's borders are signs that Ankhtepot is reawakening. The followers of Mother Night seek to hasten this.
- The *Binding Chain of Dread* the priests used to seal him away was hidden after the last cycle, and its location lost. Followers of the Morninglord have narrowed the location down to one of three tombs in the desert of Har'Akir.
- Many tombs of high priests and former pharaohs are hidden beneath the sands, and it is known for many to be cursed or trapped ... or worse.
- Mother Night's followers are also seeking the *Binding Chain of Dread* but have had little luck. Tasia and Sayid are protecting their findings as well as they can.

After the characters are finished talking to the priests, read the following to the players:

"We fear that the time of Ankhtepot's return is imminent. The Morninglord bringing you to Har'Akir is sign enough that time is running out," Tasia says as she removes the clay figures from the map, leaving a stamp of the Morninglord's emblem where they stood.

Sayid carefully rolls up the map and holds it out to you. "So," he says, looking each one of you in the eye in turn, "Will you help us prevent the dark lord's return, or will you leave us to suffer under his reign?"

During this conversation, any character with a Passive Perception of 15 or higher will notice a dark shape near one of the church's windows. It will disappear in a flash, but further investigation will find a figure in dark clothing slinking around a corner and vanishing without a trace.

If at any point before Sayid rolls up the map a character asks for a perception check, a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check will show them the same thing.

If the adventurers tell Sayid and Tasia about the lurker and what they saw, the priests will tell them the description sounds like a follower of Mother Night, and there is a chance they saw the map before it was put away. They fear time is running even shorter and urge the adventurers to hurry.

The priests also urge the party to stock up on water before they head into the desert, as Muhar is the sole source in Har'Akir.

NOTE TO DMs

We do recommend any ability checks (including Perception) during the conversation be instigated by the player only, rather than being prompted by the DM.



INTO THE DESERT

The moment that the adventurers step out of the Muhar oasis, the heat strikes them. The minimally cool breeze is gone. The air is stagnant, and the sun becomes stronger and brighter.

Anytime the adventuring party is outside of Muhar and not indoors, they are subject to Extreme Heat conditions as described on page 110 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Additionally, as the party traverses the desert, roll a d10 every 2 hours to determine if they encounter any trouble.

DESERT ENCOUNTERS

1d10 Outcome

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | No Encounter |
| 2 | 2d4 giant scorpions and 2 phase spiders |
| 3 | 3 desert zombies and a tlincalli |
| 4 | No Encounter |
| 5 | a phoenix |
| 6 | 1d4 the lost |
| 7 | a gynosphinx |
| 8 | 1d12 dust mephits |
| 9 | No Encounter |
| 10 | a mummy lord |

APPROACHING THE FIRST TOMB

The adventure is designed for the adventurers to explore all three tombs. Therefore, we have numbered them as Tombs 1, 2, and 3. Their locations are non-specific and it is intended the characters encounter each tomb in the order presented.

If, however, you wish for the *Binding Chain of Dread* to be in a specific location in the desert, with your party having the chance to discover it as their first tomb, feel free to do so. You may need to adjust various engagements with **Na'il** and other followers of Mother Night to accommodate.

TOMB OF VENISH THE LESSER

This first encounter will occur before the adventurer's reach the first tomb, regardless of order.

From the top of a dune, you can see the first of the tombs marked on the map the priests gave you. A squat sandstone building, half-buried in the sand, blends in with the desert almost imperceptibly.

Tall dunes surround it on all sides, threatening to bury it if the wind blows just right. If the wind would blow at all. What looks like a green hand painted sloppily on the sandstone is the only detail you can see from this distance.

Suddenly, you hear shouting and a party of six dark-clad figures on camels appear across the dune valley and begin descending toward the tomb entrance.

A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check will reveal two robed figures holding staves, one shirtless male with a greataxe strapped across his back, two lithe figures in loose-fitting clothes that have glinting axes hanging at their sides, and a shrouded figure with a hood up and mask over their face, leading the charge.

The mounted group rushes to the bottom of the dunes and dismounts. Immediately, they begin setting up to guard the tomb, the shrouded figure in front obviously giving commands and dictating orders.

When the shrouded figure notices the adventurers, she walks toward them, removing her hood. **Cheri** has long, dark hair, pulled back in a tail. The lower-half of her face is still obscured by the mask, and a black circle with a purple border emblazons her cloak, the emblem of Mother Night.

"I would not come any closer," the figure says. "The Tomb of Venish the Lesser and the Binding Chain of Dread within is ours to find and take."

She holds out a hand to her side and a brilliant purple-black blade of energy appears in it.

"Unless, of course, you wish to dedicate yourself to our cause. You may prostrate yourself here as we seek the object inside. You may even be blessed with a place in Ankhtepot's reformed kingdom if you do not interfere with his reawakening."

She pauses, looking at each of you in turn. "And if not, you will die where you stand."

The masked woman snaps her fingers and three of her companions break formation and head into the tomb. The other two flank her as a second purple-black blade forms in her hand.

If the party chooses to remain on the quest given by Tasia and Sayid, Cheri attacks, alongside a robed **mage** and the shirtless **gladiator**.

However, should the party choose to side with Cheri, roughly an hour passes. Cheri indicates that her people should have returned by now. She points to the adventurers and tells them she will accompany them into the tomb to find the *Binding Chain of Dread* and discover what happened with her party. She leaves the mage and the gladiator to stand guard at the entrance to the tomb.

Regardless of the outcome, the party should be ready to enter the tomb in short order.

ROOM 1: ENTRANCE

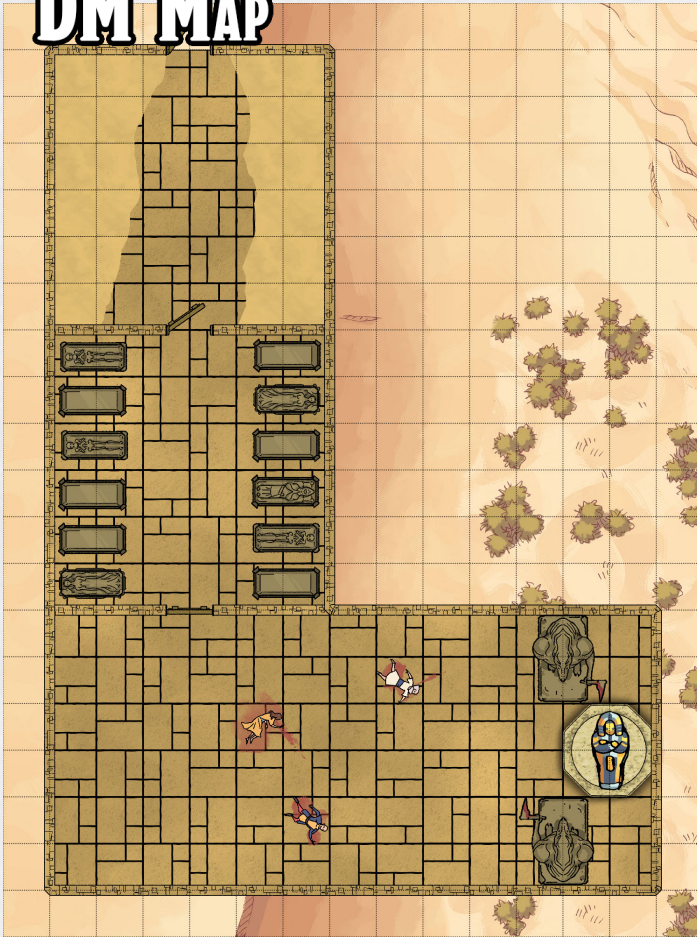
The entrance to the tomb is a square doorway, and the stone slab that had been barring the entrance is pushed inside. The only light shines in through the doorway, revealing a sandy floor and little else without entering.

Inside, the party can make out another open doorway opposite the entrance. The walls of the chamber are painted with dusty, faded murals. Footsteps lead into the next chamber.

As any member of the party approaches the door to the next chamber, three **giant scorpions** emerge from beneath the sand.

Whether from previous tomb raiders or simply not having been furnished, this room contains nothing of value. Unless your party values sand, then there is plenty of value.

DM Map



ROOM 2: SERVANT'S CHAMBER

The second room is pitch black. With darkvision or a light source, the party can see walls lined end-to-end with sarcophagi. They are not ornate, simple stone or clay creations. Many of them stand open or broken, with only a handful intact.

The walls above the sarcophagi are painted with more murals, slightly less faded than the previous room. A successful DC 14 Intelligence (Religion) check indicates the murals depict servants being prepared for entombment with their master, likely Venish the Lesser that Cheri mentioned earlier.

The floor to the room is made of broken sandstone tiles with huge patches of the sand underneath showing through. The ground is littered with piles of bones and desiccated corpses. Most of the corpses are in pieces, too, but a handful are intact.

The only open space along the wall without a sarcophagus is a stone door opposite the entrance, painted with the visage of a short woman, dressed in white and wearing a scarab amulet around her neck. The scarab's head is turned toward the floor.

The door is sealed, and a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check can reveal the scarab amulet rotates. When the scarab's head points toward the ceiling, the door begins to raise slowly.

If any sarcophagus is physically touched, the chamber begins to rumble. The door the party entered through slams shut. The piles of bones shift and move, forming humanoid figures and standing up. The desiccated corpses rise and make dry, rasping moans. 8 **skeletons** and 3 **desert zombies** converge on the party.

If the party investigates the room and checks in sarcophagi and piles of bones, they will discover a diamond worth 300 gp, a gold bird cage with electrum filigree, 2 silk robes with gold embroidery, 113 gp, and 13 sp.

ROOM 3: VENISH'S BURIAL CHAMBER

The moment that the party walks through the door into Venish's burial chamber, the door slams shut behind them.

Again, the room is pitch black with nonmagical darkness. If illuminated, the party will see the room is long and rectangular. A large, ornate, golden sarcophagus sits at the far end, and two statues holding long glaives stand upright on either side of it.

A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check allows the party to notice the lid of the sarcophagus is ajar and the statues' glaives are covered in still-wet blood.

The walls and floor of the room look very similar to the previous chamber, only more ornate, brighter in color, and in better condition. On the floor lie three bodies in black clothing, the members of Cheri's expedition that never returned.

On their bodies, the party is able to find a *potion of greater healing*, a silvered dagger, and a small pouch containing enough *dust of disappearance* for two uses.

When any adventurer gets within 10 feet of the sarcophagus, the statues animate and hold their glaives at the ready. The 2 **tomb guardians** will attack anything within 5 feet of themselves or the tomb.

If either of the tomb guardians are engaged in combat, at the beginning of the second round on Initiative 20, a **mummy lord** rises from the sarcophagus and joins its guardians.

After this encounter has been dealt with, the party may search the room for the *Binding Chain of Dread*, but it is not hidden in this tomb. Venish the Lesser's sarcophagus, however, does have the *Amulet of the Scarab Priest* and a *+1 silvered falchion*.

AMULET OF THE SCARAB PRIEST

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

Granted to Venshi the Lesser by the dark lord Ankhtepot, the amulet grants you the ability to cast *primordial ward* once each day without the need to maintain concentration on the spell. This ability resets at dawn each day.

TOMB OF ARDRAL OF THE PLANES

The entrance to the hidden tomb of Ardral of the Planes is carved directly into a large rock formation rising from the desert. As the party gets closer, they can see a wall of dark stone covered with jagged outcroppings, and at the top, the rock wall gives way to a dune that leads back down to the surface of the desert behind it. The dune starts abruptly at the top of the rockface, as though the rock wall were a large predator emerging from the sand.

As they get closer, with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check the adventurers can notice a barely visible path leading upward with switchbacks. The path upward is treacherous, 40 ft in total elevation. Three separate successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks are needed to reach the end of the path, or just one successful check with appropriate climbing gear.

At the end of the path is a circular cave entrance blocked by a nondescript stone slab. Painted around the circular doorway is a golden braid that meets at the top in a splash of purple-black energy. A combined DC 30 Strength (Athletics) check can move the slab from the tomb entrance.

DM Map



ARDRAL'S GRAND CHAMBER

The entrance to the tomb is 10 feet across. The length of the entranceway is trapped with two crystals embedded on either side of the doorway, on the inside. These crystals detect any creature that passes between them. When this happens, the crystals cast a 5th-level *chromatic orb* with a random damage type at the creature that triggered the trap. The trap resets immediately, ready to be tripped again.

A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the trap mechanism and a DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check will determine the magical method with which to disarm it.

The interior of the room itself is a huge room with round walls and a tall ceiling that doesn't seem to fit in the space outside of the tomb. Along the walls and the ceiling, murals of stars and planets and moons and discs connected with colored, braided energy.

The floor is made up of three concentric rings. The first is 15 feet wide, then steps down 1 foot, another 15-foot wide circle, before dropping another foot to the center of the room, a 20 foot-radius circle. In the center of the lowest concentric circle is a square dais, on which an ornate, golden sarcophagus stands upright.

At each of the platform's corners a staff stands upright, each with a different colored gem at the end: red, blue, green, and yellow. Any creature that gets within 5 feet of a staff is targeted by one of the following abilities. Each ability may only occur twice before the staff is out of charges and is destroyed.

STAFF TRAPS

Color Effect

Red *Polymorph*. The targeted creature must succeed at a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be polymorphed into one of the following: **cat, scorpion, camel, or hyena**.

Blue *Teleport*. The targeted creature must succeed at a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be teleported out of the chamber, reappearing 40 feet above the ground, midair, 300 feet away from the caster.

Green *Petrification*. The targeted creature must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the creature begins to turn to stone and is restrained. It must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn. On a success, the effect ends. On a failure, the creature is petrified until freed by the greater restoration spell or other magic.

Yellow *Disintegration*. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take 45 (10d8) force damage. If this damage reduces the creature to 0 hit points, its body becomes a pile of fine gray dust.



Each staff has an AC of 15, 15 hp, resistance to all types of damage, and immunity to all conditions. When a staff is destroyed, it explodes in a shockwave and each creature within 30 feet must successfully make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take 3d10 force damage, or half as much on a failed save.

Should *dispel magic* be cast on any of the staves, the proximity enchantment should be considered 5th level. If dispelled, however, each may be utilized as an arcane focus with 2 charges of the respective abilities above (less any charges expended during this encounter). When out of charges, even in a character's care, the staff is destroyed and releases the force shockwave.

When the sarcophagus is opened, Ardral of the Planes bursts forth, using the stats of a **revenant**. Mist spills from the container, swirling around Ardral and forming into a **fire elemental** and an **air elemental**, flanking Ardral. Upon defeating the creatures, the party finds no *Binding Chain of Dread* within the tomb or the sarcophagus, but they are able to discover *Ardral's Cloak of Displacement* on Ardral's corpse and 97 gp in the sarcophagus.

ARDRAL'S CLOAK OF DUPLICITY

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

Blessed by the dark lord Ankhtepot before his last sealing, this shimmering and colorful cloak grants you the ability to cast *invoke duplicity* by expending one of its charges. The cloak has two charges, and these refresh whenever you take a short or a long rest.

TOMB OF N'ZAL THE BREATHLESS

N'zal the Breathless was a well-known and much-feared high priest of Ankhtepot. It is not known if she was involved in the sealing away of the dark lord, her tomb has nevertheless been avoided by all but the most daring (and perhaps mad) treasure hunters and tomb raiders.

The adventurers come across this tomb in the exact spot Tasia had marked on the map. A stone building stands above the sands, unlike anything the party has seen outside of Muhar. Like everything else in Har'Akir, it is in disrepair and worn by the harsh environment. Still, it seems to be a bit more ostentatious than any other building they've encountered in Har'Akir. Though that isn't saying much.

A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a series of non-human footprints leading into the tomb. A DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival) deduces the footprints to be from multiple gnolls.

ROOM 1: TOMB FOYER

The stone door to the tomb is open and leads into a dimly lit room. The sun shining in from outside illuminates it, as well as a torch held by a single **gnoll** on the opposite side of the room. The gnoll stands in front of a closed door, a spear in one hand, torch in the other. It begins to growl as soon as the adventurers enter the chamber.

If the adventurers move closer to it, the gnoll drops the torch to the ground and charges with the spear in both hands. If the gnoll is killed, the spear is a mundane spear, and the body has a pouch with 13 cp inside.

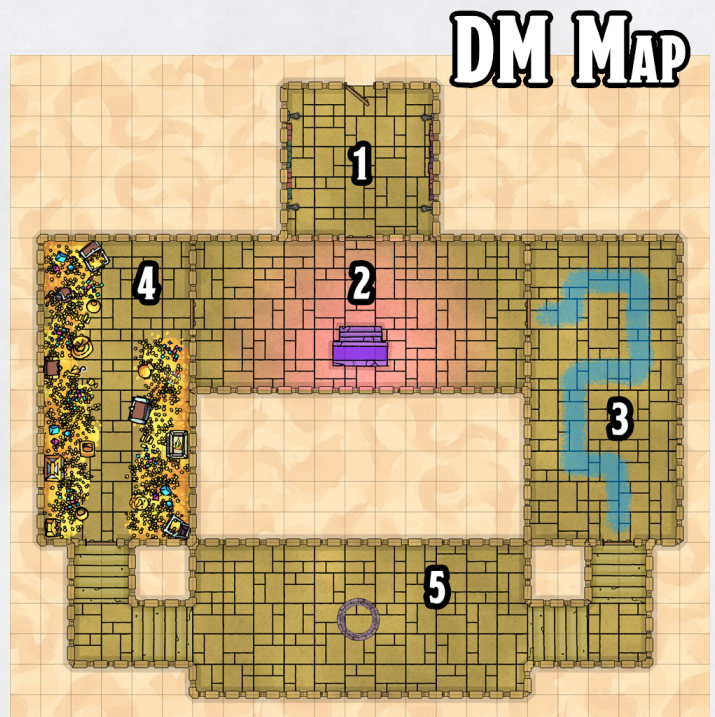
The chamber itself is square with a single doorway leading further into the tomb. Murals adorn the walls, along with sconces holding burned-out torches. Nothing of value seems to be hidden in the chamber.

The door to the next chamber opens easily, revealing an oblong room, dimly lit with torch light and a strange purple-black aura.

ROOM 2: MOTHER NIGHT'S ALTAR

The purple-black aura that can be seen through the door comes from an altar near the opposite wall. On it, a large **gnoll fang of Yeenoghu** is writhing on the altar, obviously in pain. This creature uses the gnoll fang of yeenoghu stat block found in the *Monster Manual*, but the power is granted by Mother Night, rather than Yeenoghu. A **gnoll pack lord** stands behind it, performing whatever ritual is transforming the gnoll. The ritual finishes just as the door to the chamber opens.

Two **gnolls** stand on either side of the door, waiting to ambush anyone who passes through. A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check will allow a character to notice them, waiting to attack. If the party engages them in combat, the two at the altar join in, leaping toward the party at full-speed. They yip and snarl at the adventurers for interrupting their ritual.





After the group of gnolls have been dealt with, the party may find 4 spears and a set of chainmail on their bodies. On the wall behind the altar is the emblem of Mother Night, a black circle wreathed by purple flame. A successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check indicates it can be worn as a shield, the *Shield of Mother Night's Chosen*.

When the room is clear, the adventurers can see that this entire room is dedicated to Mother Night. The murals decorating each of the walls incorporate her emblem in some manner. Additionally, another figure, robed entirely in black appears in every scene depicted, each time larger than any other figures who somehow prostrate themselves or appear subservient to them. With a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check, an adventurer may correctly interpret that figure to be Ankhtepot before his sealing away.

There are doors on the east and west ends of the rectangular room, each emblazoned with Mother Night's symbol as well as a large image of Ankhtepot.

SHIELD OF MOTHER NIGHT'S CHOSEN

Armor (shield), very rare (requires attunement)

While holding this +1 shield, you are granted the *Devil's Sight* warlock invocation. Additionally, you have advantage on ability checks and saving throws when in the dark, and attack rolls against you while in the dark have disadvantage.

ROOM 3: DARKNESS

The room to the east is enshrouded completely in a magical darkness that cannot be dispelled.

The floor of the chamber is covered in large, square tiles. All but a single path of tiles through the chamber are trapped. If a character possesses a method to see through magical darkness, such as Devil's Sight, a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check will allow them to notice the path as being a different darker shade than the rest of the floor.

When triggered, a trapped tile will release a cloud of gas from the center that deals 1d6 poison damage to anyone in 5 ft.

The safe path through the chamber leads to a set of stairs leading down and to the right. The magical darkness ends when the stairway begins.

ROOM 4: N'ZAL'S TEST OF GREED

To the west of Mother Night's altar, the door opens to a room of glittering gold. Gilded tables, golden goblets, chests made of gold litter the room. Gold coins fill goblets and overflow. The walls, rather than being stone with murals, appear to be solid gold, etched with *Akiri* letters and various hieroglyphs.

Golden statues of all sizes stand beside and between all the other objects. Some are cast in the form of creatures such as cats, griffons, or scorpions, while others are humanoids of varying species, with the most common being human. A gnoll and goblin can be spotted among them, too.

All is not what it seems, however, as any single item in this room has a 75% chance to be a **mimic**. The exit door on the far side of the room is always a **mimic**, and beyond it is a staircase leading down and to the left.

When any item is touched, roll 1d4. On a result of 1-3, the item is a Mimic, and on 4, the item is real treasure. If the item is tiny, such as a gold coin, and the roll indicates that it is a mimic, the entire pile or collection of items nearby is the mimic in disguise.



ROOM 5: N'ZAL'S BURIAL CHAMBER

Both sets of stairs from Rooms 3 and 4 lead to opposite ends of this chamber. The chamber is dimly lit, the light coming from illuminated script that is etched into the walls.

Hanging from the ceiling in the center of the room is a 5-foot, circular shelf suspended by chains. The shelf itself is a large emblem of Mother Night, and on it sits what has to be the *Binding Chain of Dread*, coiled in the center.

It appears unguarded and untrapped. No barrier surrounds it. The *Binding Chain of Dread* is simply there to take. On investigation, nothing seems amiss, and *detect magic* reveals that it's a magical object with a necromantic aura, as are the shelf and chains.

When the *Binding Chain of Dread* is moved from the shelf by any means, read the following:

Laughter that turns into a cackle echoes around the chamber as both staircases are engulfed purple-black fire, sealing the room and barring the way back upstairs. Mist begins to pour from the illuminated script on the walls, carpeting the floor and swirling around your feet.

From beneath the *Binding Chain of Dread's* platform, the mist rises into a column, spiraling like a tornado. In seconds, the whirlwind is replaced by a floating figure. The figure wears dark robes embroidered with gold, hood pulled over their head.

Skinless fingers grip the chains holding the platform aloft, and you can just make out a thin-lipped smile from beneath the hood.

"The master's return nears, then," the figure rasps. It looks at the *Binding Chain of Dread*. "So my time has come at last."

N'zal floats down from the platform, dark robes billowing in a non-existent breeze.

"Give it to me so that I may complete my duty and return the dark lord to power and attain my place at his side." N'zal reaches out a skeletal hand toward the party, obviously expecting to receive the *Binding Chain of Dread*. "You have done well in catalyzing my return. Your efforts will be rewarded when the dark lord once again controls his domain."

Whether the party chooses to hand over the *Binding Chain of Dread* to **N'zal the Breathless** or not, she thanks them for their service in returning her to life, triggering the spell to bring her back, and then calls them fools.

She then casts *wall of fire* to encircle the party. N'zal will share the glory from raising Ankhtepot with no one.

When defeated, N'zal's body falls to the ground. Her physical form disintegrates upon defeat, leaving her *Breathless Robes* in a pile on the floor. In the pocket of the robes is a *decanter of endless water*.

The enchantments sealing the room dissipate, and the way upstairs is once again opened. The previous rooms' enchantments and hazards are still in effect, however.

BREATHLESS ROBES

wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)

Black with ornate embroidery, these robes were worn by N'zal the Breathless. While wearing these robes you no longer have the need to breathe and cannot be affected by spells or effects that are based on inhalation, both positive or negative. You can stay indefinitely underwater or within airtight spaces without the need to breathe. All other survival requirements still apply, however.

EXITING N'ZAL'S TOMB

As the party exits the tomb, they are stopped by a group of black-clothed people on horseback. The leader introduces himself as **Na'il** and says that he will be taking the *Binding Chain of Dread* now that the party has found it.

Na'il says that he has been sent from Muhar to find the chain and recover it. If the party chose to side with Cheri earlier in the adventure and if she has survived to this point, she will confirm that Na'il and his band are there to escort them back to the oasis.

If the party refuses to hand over the *Binding Chain of Dread*, Na'il and his party attempt to take it by force. Na'il's party consists of 2 **gladiators**, 2 **mages**, an **eternal flame priest**, and Na'il himself.



WRAPPING UP THE ADVENTURE

When the party returns to Muhar with the *Binding Chain of Dread*, things appear just the same as they were previously. It is apparent that the oasis is in a perpetual state of near-melancholy.

If the party chooses not to join with Cheri or Na'il, they should go to the Morninglord's church to find Tasia and Sayid. The two priests stand in the street and look overjoyed when they see the party. They gesture toward the *Binding Chain of Dread*, eager to take it from the party.

When it's in their possession, mist begins to form around the party's feet. The two priests head toward Mother Night's church and pull open the unlocked door.

If Na'il and/or Cheri are with the party, they smile and go into the church toward the altar as well. The priests place the *Binding Chain of Dread* on an altar in the church and the sky begins to grow dark. They then turn around and smile at the party.

Read the following to the players:

"You trusting fools," Tasia says. "The Morninglord has had no power in the domains of dread for millennia."

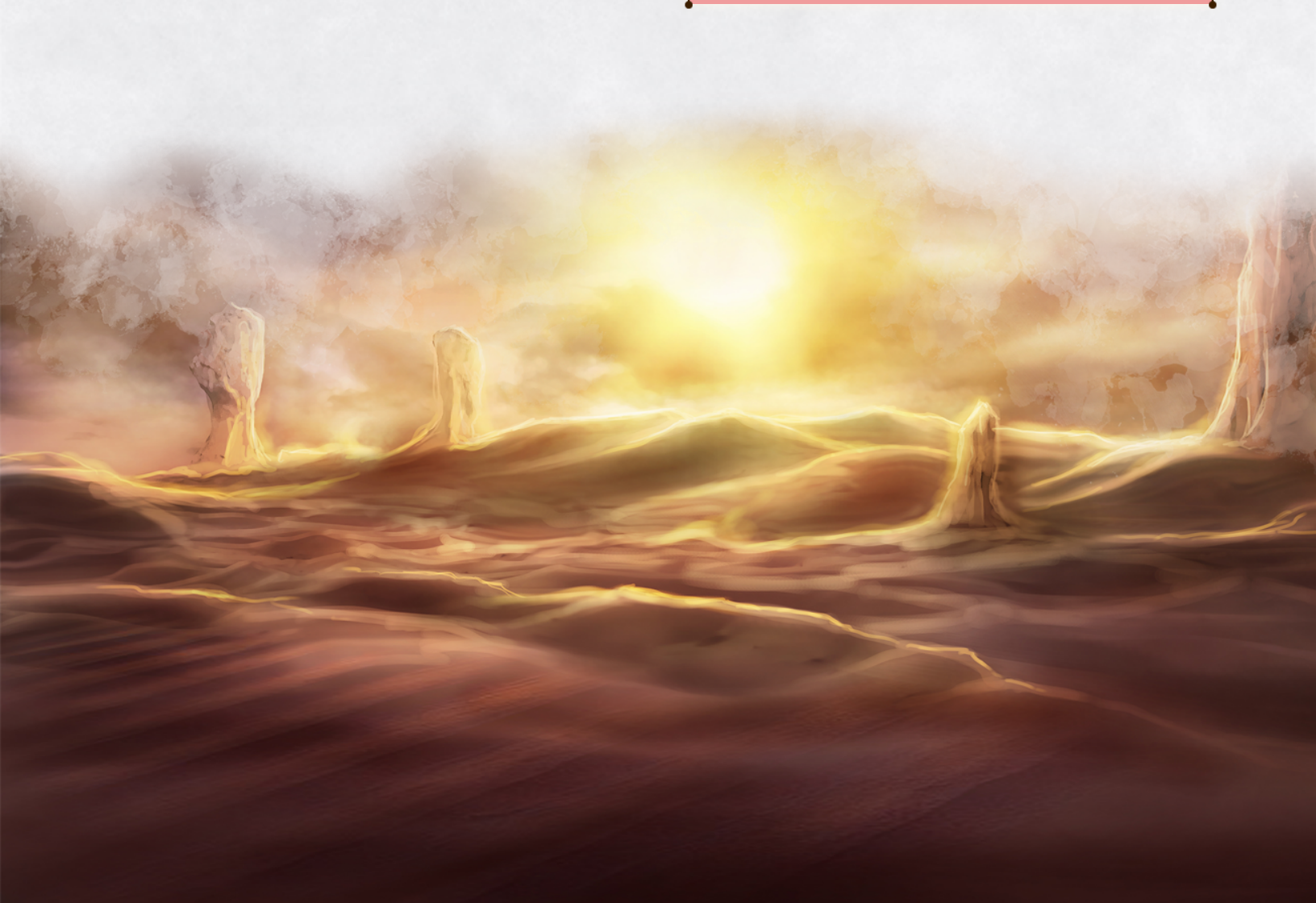
She gestures at the church across the road, and you can see the building is in deep disrepair, the Morninglord's emblem tarnished and broken. The building was obviously glamour'd during your previous visit.

You see dark-robed figures surround the *Binding Chain of Dread* and purple-black energy begin to flow from them into the object. The ground rumbles, and the sky overhead darkens even more. The mist flows thicker around your feet, moving upward to cover the entire party.

"We do thank you, though. Ankhtepot's reawakening is inevitable, and you sped along the process. We will make sure the dark lord is aware of your service to him. Should you ever return to Har'Akir, you will certainly have the dark lord's blessing."

With a simultaneous flourish of their hands, Tasia and Sayid cause the mist to fully envelop you. The world flashes white. As the mist dissipates around you, the searing heat of Har'Akir is gone.

You are in familiar surroundings, the exact location where you first saw the mysterious mist that brought you to Ankhtepot's domain of dread.



THE TIMEKEEPER'S TOWER

AN ADVENTURE FOR FOUR TO SIX CHARACTERS OF 3RD TO 4TH LEVEL

Written by Walter "Jayare411" Srebalus



LAMORDIA

The land of Lamordia has a truly diverse landscape with mountains inland, thick forested areas, fields for raising livestock and an extensive shoreline with islands off its coast. The land exhibits extreme seasons that bring heavy rain and flooding in Spring. The Summers deliver scorching heat and moving into Fall, the land is plagued with clouds with a lack of sunlight. The Winters bring a severe cold with harsh blizzard conditions.

The people of Lamordia put all their faith in the science of technology and viewing religion and arcane beliefs as heresy. Most Lamordians value education over most everything else, with only their children taking precedence.

The land is ruled by a baron who mostly goes unseen, but the true rulers of Lamordia are Dr. Mordenheim and the "Creature" that the doctor created. The Creature was created by the doctor from experiments utilizing miscellaneous body parts and was given the spark of life with a lightning bolt harnessed from the sky.

The doctor was pleased with the Creature until one day the Creature went into a fit of rage destroying most of the doctor's laboratory and leaving the doctor's loved ones in despair. Since that incident, the doctor has banished the Creature, where it now currently lives in exile along the coast. The doctor continues to work on experiments in hopes of one day repairing what the Creature has broken.

INTRODUCTION

This adventure takes place in a city within Lamordia. The city is not specified in the adventure allowing the DM to place it in any desired location that meets their campaign setting. This adventure is designed for four to six characters of 3rd to 4th level.

CONTENT WARNING

There are references to endangering a child and body mutilation within this adventure.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Newlyweds Victor and Angelina had everything going for them in their small house in town. Victor spent most of his time in his workshop creating clockwork mechanics that helped him keep track of the night sky and perform simple tasks. His cluttered shop is connected to a tower that keeps track of the sun and moon, ringing a bell at daybreak and twilight.

As months passed, the couple's happiness continued to grow, until Angelina went missing. Victor, along with an organized militia, had little success in locating her or identifying any clues to her disappearance. As years passed, Victor became reclusive amongst the townsfolk while he dealt with the mystery of his missing wife.

Twenty-eight years later, Victor was sleeping in his workshop when he was awakened by the sound of an opening door. He focused his eyes, and assured he was no longer sleeping, saw Angelina standing in front of him looking confused, and not a day older than the day she went missing.

Between being ecstatic, confused and concerned, Victor rushes his wife into his workshop sealing the door behind her before any townsfolk take notice. Victor attempts to understand what happened by bombarding her with an array of questions, with her unable to answer any of them. Angelina, unable to remember anything, explains she was drawn to the workshop based on a vague memory as she attempted to recall her past.

Victor spends the next few weeks trying to help her recall her memories with letters, books, and pictures from their past, all of them leading her to recollect them as hazy outlines. Showing signs of undergoing some sort of surgical procedure, thinly scarred sutures can be seen around her body parts, with a small number inked onto her skin above her right hand "S-352". The number being a mystery to Victor as much as her disappearance.

While she is being cared for by Victor, she continues to exhibit no appetite for food or water, has an unwillingness to sleep, and her body is cold to the touch. To keep her safe until he can understand more, she is kept in the workshop hidden from the outside world. Being treated much like a prisoner, Angelina finds herself retreating to the top of the tower, where she watches the townsfolk go on with their day to day lives. With the majority of the townsfolk busy with their daily duties many don't take notice of her staring down upon the street. Her only sight of comfort is a small girl that takes notice of her.

Each day, the little girl passes by giving Angelina a subtle wave of the hand and smile, with this becoming Angelina's highlight of the day and increasing her desire to leave the tower. Victor rejects her requests to depart the tower and workshop, in fear of being unable to answer any questions the townsfolk may have. Maintaining daily watch and ensuring her safety has become a grueling task for Victor, leading him into a sleeping binge from extreme exhaustion.

During his deep sleep, she takes the opportunity to escape the workshop. Angelina begins walking the streets with the curiosity of a child and seems to remember bits and pieces of the scenery but is unable to connect them together. She makes her way into the market, where she meets the little girl she befriended from afar. The little girl offers her a tart as they find a small crate to sit and share their tasty treat.





It all seemed innocent, until a few onlookers recognized Angelina and began asking questions. As the townsfolk barrage her with questions and accusations, her initial panic turns to rage. Exhibiting extraordinary strength, she begins trashing food stalls and aggressively keeping onlookers at bay. In her state of confusion and rage, she takes the little girl in her arms and retreats to the workshop. Her agitation grows as she throws the workshop into shambles and continues her destruction up the tower with the young girl clutched in her arms.

Unbeknownst to Victor, his wife was taken 28-years ago by Dr. Mordenheim of Lamordia. With the doctor's never-ending experiments on unwilling test subjects, Angelina was to be a creature created to mimic life and retain memories from her previous life. The doctor branded her with a tattoo on her right hand "S-352", which they referred to her as 352. While the experiment was considered somewhat a success, she exhibited an unstoppable rage which led to her escaping from the doctor's lair. After her escape, she wandered back into the town she once knew, leading her back to her husband's workshop.

ADVENTURE HOOK

The characters should be in town when they witness a commotion of people standing outside the timekeeper's tower asking for anyone brave enough to enter and save the young child taken. Many of the townsfolk look to the outsiders, pleading for them to help. Most of the talk amongst the crowd is about the child's safety, but characters can gather the following information if they listen to the crowd or begin to question the townsfolk.

- "The timekeeper's wife, Angelina, disappeared nearly thirty years ago and has recently reappeared, she has not aged a day since she went missing."
- "The timekeeper is a skilled craftsman capable of building elaborate clockwork creations."
- "Angelina was most recently seen in the marketplace, where she destroyed most of the stalls and has taken a child hostage up in the tower."

The father's daughter offers 500 gp for the return of his daughter and wants the woman who took her to pay for her crime.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This adventure assumes the characters are already in a city within Lamordia, when they see a crowd gather outside the timekeeper's tower. The adventurers choosing to aid the townsfolk, enter the workshop and follow the path of destruction left behind by Angelina up the tower. The path is set in a linear fashion, allowing the characters to investigate the workshop and progress to the top of the tower meeting challenges of clockwork creatures and environmental hazards from the damage sustained to the timekeeping device within the tower. With the main goal of rescuing the young girl taken by Angelina, how the characters deal with the threat of the Timekeepers wife is truly up to them.

THE TIMEKEEPER'S TOWER

The workshop is a 35 ft. by 20 ft. wooden structure attached to a six-story stone tower. The lower portion of the tower is slightly tapered supporting the larger section of the upper tower. The upper section of the tower has a large circular clocklike face with marks on its perimeter with a moon and sun positioned on it. A single large dial slowly moves around the face of the timekeeping device keeping track of the rising and setting sun in the sky. The bells on the top floor of the tower ring once at midday and twice at midnight.

GENERAL FEATURES

Roof. Both roofs of these structures are made of wood and slate tiles. Climbing on the roof tiles requires a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check for every 10ft. to avoid slipping.

Ceiling. The flat ceiling is 10ft. high in most portions of the workshop and tower unless otherwise noted. Both roofs of these structures are made of wood and slate tiles.

Walls. The walls of the workshop are made of wood and the tower of stone.

Floor. The floor in the workshop is laid with limestone tiles and the tower's floor is made of wood.

Doors. All doors are made of wood with iron bands, unless otherwise noted (AC 16, 20 hp).

Stairs. The stairs of the tower are made of wood.

Lighting. The corridors and chambers are unlit unless specified.

WORKSHOP

Read the following description when the players first enter the workshop:

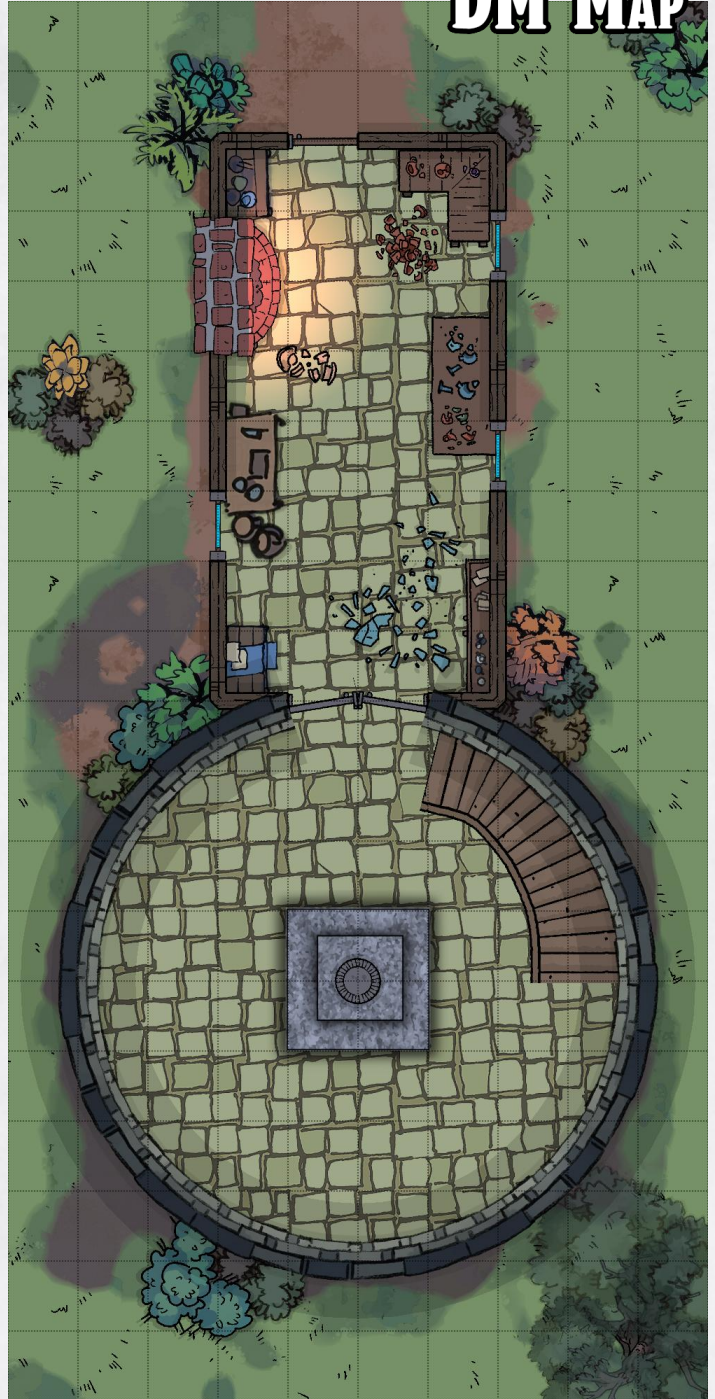
Opening the door reveals a room that has been left in shambles, with most of the furniture smashed. Books, metal gears and other odd items lie on the floor as shelves have been smashed or torn off the walls. What remains of a painting of a young couple still hangs on the wall while portions of the damaged picture are scattered among the wreckage.

While most of the room has been destroyed, sheets of parchment, books, unfinished mechanisms, and clockwork trinkets litter the area. Characters taking time to search the area notice the books are of the scientific arts and clockwork creations and of little or no value. They will also find among the gears and random trinkets is a coil of gold wire worth 50gp, a set of tinker's tools, and pages from a notebook. The pages contain the following information:

- “Angelina showed up on my doorstep after she was missing for 28 years. She has not aged a bit but shows signs of having some sort of surgical procedure. Her hands don't seem to be her own and she has a tattoo mark of “S-352” on her right hand.”
- “She cannot remember anything from her past and those things she does remember only come back to her as a remembrance of dreams, or nightmares?? Pressing her to remember usually ends up with her becoming angry. During her anger episodes, she has demonstrated an unnatural strength.”

- “While the love of my life has returned, she doesn't seem to be all the same. She hasn't eaten since she has returned. I do not think I have ever seen her sleep and she is cold to the touch.”
- “Her body seems to be a conductor of static-electricity and can expel a spark at the most inopportune times.”

DM Map



A character who performs a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check, can locate one of the following random clockwork trinkets or items:

RANDOM CLOCKWORK TRINKETS

1d6 Clockwork Trinket

- 1 A music box that can fit in your hand, when the lid is lifted it begins to play an unknown song. The music stops playing only when the lid is closed.
- 2 A glass flask containing *oil of slipperiness*
- 3 A wooden spool with a small button on the side. The spool contains 30 feet of silk string and when the button is pressed, tiny gears inside the spool begin to spin as the spool retracts the string.
- 4 A 5-inch gear made of an unknown black metal which cannot rust and weighs as light as a feather.
- 5 A *pole of collapsing*
- 6 A small clockwork toy dragon with small red jewels as eyes, whenever someone looks at the toy the eyes flash red.

The double door to the west leads to the tower.

AREA 1: FIRST FLOOR TOWER

Read the following description to the players when the characters open the double-door leading into the tower:

In the middle of the room is a large metal rod bolted to the floor leading towards the top of the tower through a hole in the ceiling. The metal rod is spinning and looks to be part of the timekeeping contraption on top of the tower. The floor is made of tile limestone and wooden stairs lead upward to the next floor. The ceiling is ten feet tall and made of wood. Standing in the room are two dogs made of gears and brass armor standing guard at the stairs.

Two **clockwork hounds** have been placed here by Victor to help protect his wife from hostile actions from the townsfolk. The clockwork hounds attack any creature that gets within 5 feet of them and follows anyone that begins going up the stairs.

The metal rod is freestanding in a lined metal indentation in the ground. Any attempts to stop the rod from spinning is near impossible, but it can be slowed with a successful DC 23 Strength (Athletics) check.

DM Map

3rd Floor

4th Floor

6th Floor

5th Floor

AREA 2: SECOND FLOOR TOWER

Read the following description to the players when the characters ascend to the second floor of the tower:

The stairs lead up to the second level of the tower, revealing a room in chaos with four pendulums swinging wildly. The pendulums block the path to the wooden stairs on the other side of the room leading to the next level up.

The pendulums are swinging in random directions from Angelina when she retreated to the tower and began damaging the mechanisms in her rage. Any character entering the space for the first time or begins their turn in the room needs to make a successful DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d8 bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.

Any creature attempting to stop the pendulums from swinging can use an action and make a DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check. On a failed check, the character must make a successful DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d8 bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.

AREA 3: THIRD FLOOR TOWER

Read the following description to the players when the characters ascend to the third floor of the tower:

The sharp sounds of grinding metal can be heard as the room is filled with spinning gears moving in different directions with many of the gears out of place causing them to shear off pieces of metal. A set of stairs can be seen leading to the next level of the tower.

The room is considered difficult terrain and any creature entering the room for the first time or beginning their turn in there must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d6 bludgeoning damage from the moving gears, half as much on a successful save. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check can determine which gear to remove and stop the gears from moving all together. Using thieves' tools or tinker's tools, the gear can be removed with a DC 10 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check to remove the gear, subsequently stopping the gears and the pendulums from swinging on the floor below.

AREA 4: FOURTH FLOOR TOWER

Read the following description to the players when the characters ascend to the fourth floor of the tower:

The metal rod in the middle of the room leads to the next floor of the tower where an older disheveled man sits on wooden steps that lead to the next level. With a lantern in one hand, he gets up and begins to beg for everyone to leave the tower.

The older man on the steps is Victor, male human **noble**, and he will do anything to protect Angelina. He will try to convince the characters to let him handle the situation and states the following information.

- "Angelina is not always like this. While she may not always remember the past, there are moments that she can."
- "She didn't intend to hurt the child. She only took her out of confusion and didn't mean any harm."
- "The child is safe. You should leave the tower."

Any character making an appeal to him that they will not harm Angelina and guaranteeing her safety, can make a DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check. On a success Victor will allow the party to pass. He would be willing to go with the party if requested and escort them to the next level. Otherwise, Victor will object to the party going higher in the tower. If it comes to violence, Victor will retreat up the stairs so he may rely on the guard there.

AREA 5: FIFTH FLOOR TOWER

Read the following description to the players when the characters ascend to the fifth floor of the tower:

This floor is slightly larger than the rest of the tower. There is a center rod attached to four arms which are fastened to the timekeeping dials. Those dials are connected to the clock face outside the tower. Standing guard in front of a wooden ladder in the southwest corner is a clockwork creature crafted to look like a humanoid with brass features.



The **clockwork guard** was created by Victor and follows his commands. If the party persuades Victor to let them ascend the stairs and he is with them, he commands the clockwork guard to stand down and not attack. If Victor is not with the party or if Victor retreated here when violence broke out between him and the party, it will begin attacking the party to prevent anyone from going up the ladder.

AREA 6: SIXTH FLOOR TOWER

Read the following description to the players when the characters ascend to the sixth floor of the tower:

This room is the furthestmost section of the tower and houses the bell that the timekeeping mechanism controls. Pacing back and forth is Angelina, with a look of panic and confusion upon her face. There are four windows that overlook the town and allow the bell to resonate when it rings. A small child is sitting in the southwest corner of the tower and looks to be frightened and scared of the situation.

Angelina with all her confusion and unpredictable rage, will begin to attack the first character that makes their way up. Any character that desires to rationalize with her and attempt in calming her rage can do so with a DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check. If Victor is with the party and willing to help, all Charisma checks can be made with advantage.

If combat ensues, she will use her bonus action to swing the bell causing every creature in 30-foot radius to make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become deafened until the end of their next round.

ROLEPLAYING ANGELINA

Angelina is not herself. Her memories are tenuous, at best, and when pressured to remember, she often flies into an angry rage. Rationalizing with her is difficult, even with Victor's assistance.

At the point when the characters encounter Angelina, she is awash in a sea of conflicting emotions and unstable. She is angry with herself for her uncontrollable rage, she is afraid because she knows she shouldn't have taken the child hostage, but she still feels protective of the girl. And she is also confused and wary of anything happening to her.

Dealing with Angelina should be confusing and wild for the players, with Angelina's emotions switching directions rapidly and making convincing her to comply without conflict a difficult task.

WRAPPING UP THE ADVENTURE

If the party returns the little girl unscathed, the little girl's father gives the party 500 gp and a gold ring with a red stone set within it. The father explains that the gold is the family's life savings, and the ring has heretic powers, with him having no such use for those types of things. The ring is a *ring of fire resistance*.

If the little girl was killed, the father sadly pays the party 250 gp and explains he needs the other half of what he promised to pay for a funeral and burial for his daughter.

If Victor survives, but Angelina was destroyed, you may choose to make him a long-term antagonist for your campaign, with Victor silently vowing to have his revenge against the party. Perhaps Victor begins creating more sinister mechanical creations and sending them after the party, or maybe he attempts to use his mechanical knowledge to create golems made of both flesh and mechanical components and sends those which he researches reviving his wife. There are several possibilities for interesting further adventures with Victor as a villain.



SACRED GROVE

AN ADVENTURE FOR FOUR TO SIX CHARACTERS OF 5TH TO 7TH LEVEL

Written by Walter "Jayare411" Srebalus



FORLORN

The land of Forlorn is shrouded in gloomy skies and a persistent mist which gives it an eerie ambiance. When the fog and mist momentarily lift and give a glimmer of relief, ruins of a castle can be seen on a ridge. Never leaving the castle is the lord of the domain, said to be the one that maintains the appearance of the

land. Lush forests occupy the land, with mountain ranges looming in the distance. Anyone entering the forests will quickly realize that all is not what it seems, as the leaves on the trees do not appear healthy. The trees are intertwined, the ground is littered with skeletal remains and inhabited by unsightly creatures that retain the blighted presence of the land. Many of the creatures are following the commands of the lord of the domain.

The land lacks large civilizations, leaving most of the area to appear wild and untamed. A small group of druids remain hidden within these blighted forests protecting pockets of green woodlands. These rare pockets of greenery are referred to as sacred groves and protected by the druids of the land. When possible, the druids will go out and encourage new areas of growth to occur to fight against the diseased forestland.

INTRODUCTION

Placed in a wilderness setting, this adventure takes place within a blighted forest of Forlorn. This short adventure is designed for four to six characters of 5th to 7th level.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The druids of Forlorn are locked in a constant battle with twisted and corrupted creatures that follow the commands of the ruler of this domain, Tristen ApBlanc. These creatures of Tristen's seek out to destroy the sacred groves and eradicate the druids from the land.

With the druids' relentless attempt to expand the sacred groves and return the forests to what they were, a new area has been discovered that will assist with their battle. A druidic scout identified a section that can become a future home of healthy plant life to create a new sustainable grove. With a plan in motion, a faction of druids attempted to make their way to the area and begin the process of establishing the future grove.

Clearing the diseased plants and other undesirable creatures posed a difficult task, taking multiple days for them to begin making progress. It was not long until the druids' work was halted, forcing them to retreat as the denizens of the forest began to attack and fight back. In the state of panic and confusion, the retreating druids became separated from one another, leaving them to fend for themselves. It is uncertain of the future of the planned sacred grove, as what remains of the group is unknown.

ADVENTURE HOOK

When the characters are traveling through the wilderness, a wounded person in the distance can be spotted. The wounded person is Frax, male human **druid**, a member of the Forlorn druidic circle that was forced to retreat. Frax has 5 levels of exhaustion and is at 1 hit point.

He quickly recognizes the adventurers are not from this region and pleads for their help to complete the druids' mission. He is pale, crusted blood covers his face, and his skin is cold to the touch. He knows his future is grim and he will be unable to complete his goals of securing the planned grove. If any healing is given to him, he insists on remaining there to regain his strength and encourages the adventurers to go without him, as they cannot wait for him to rest and recuperate if the grove is to be saved.

Frax hands the adventurers a backpack, saying, "Please take these items and help secure our future." The backpack contains a small sack with seeds of wildflowers, a two-foot sapling wrapped in burlap, and three large flasks containing a sweet-smelling liquid. All the items in the backpack radiate transmutation magic.

Frax gives the characters directions to follow a narrow path that will lead them to the area they need to be and directions on how to use the items he gave them. Read the following to the players:

After handing you the backpack containing the items you need, Frax says, "Three areas were planned to be cleansed for the new grove to take root to help combat the blighted forests. Completing the unfinished work of the druids will help guarantee the success of the grove.

"First, you must finish clearing the ground of vines and spread the seeds that will replace all things dark with colorful wildflowers. Then, pour the contents of the flasks into the murky pond. The liquid in the flasks will cleanse the water and make it drinkable again.

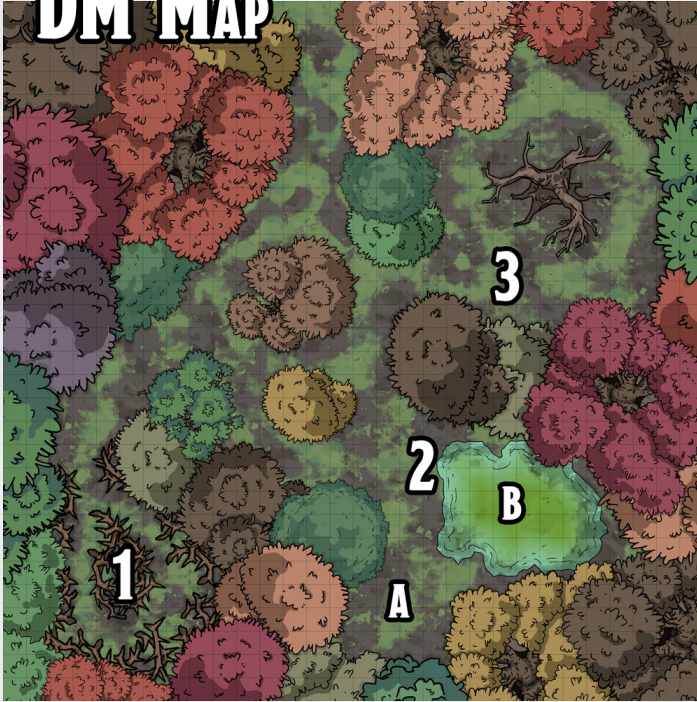
"Finally, the dark tree no longer serves its purpose and needs to be removed. Chop the tree down and plant this sapling so a new and healthier tree can take its place."

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This adventure assumes the characters are in Forlorn. How or when they get transported to this domain of dread is up to the Dungeon Master. The characters meet a druid that has been mortally injured and pleads with them to finish the task that he and others have planned out. The druid provides the characters with a brief history of the current events and the items needed to complete the end goal. With the needed items, the characters will need to go to three locations and perform tasks that will help the druids claim an area as a future sacred grove.

SACRED GROVE

DM Map



GENERAL FEATURES

The woodlands of Forlorn consist of evergreens and hardwoods. The undergrowth is filled with bramble and briar shrubs entangled together creating dense walls of thorns. The ground of the pathways is covered with skeletal bones of miscellaneous creatures and the scent of decay is carried in the air.

Floor. The floor of the forest rarely sees daylight and the ground is littered with bones of several different creatures. At times, the crunching of bones can be heard with every step making it difficult to remain quiet or hidden. All creatures have disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made in the area.

Forest Canopy. The treetops create a thick 40-foot-high canopy, making it difficult to move through and blocking out most light during the day. Any creature moving through the treetops for the first time or starting their turn in them must successfully make a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Strength (Athletics) check, or become tangled in the branches, becoming grappled. Moving through the treetops is considered difficult terrain.

Lighting. With the lack of sunlight and the thick treetop canopy above, the area is considered lightly obscured, unless another light source is present.

Pathways. The pathways within the forest are lined with impassable thorn bushes, creating walls 10-feet high and 5-feet thick with an AC 12, 25 hp, and immunity to bludgeoning, piercing and psychic damage. Characters can attempt to make their own path, but it would prove to be tiresome.

AREA 1: THE VINES

Read the following description when the players enter the area:

The pathway narrows as it leads into a clearing with blackened vines and silvery leaves covering the forest floor. Each vine is two-inches thick and intertwined with other vines, leaving only a small path to walk.

Under the vines are two deceased bodies of druids that have fallen victim to 3 **assassin vines**. A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check will allow a character to notice the deceased bodies lying within the vines. The assassin vines have adapted to the harsh environment giving them the blackish appearance. The vines begin attacking any creature attempting to move or harm them.

Once the vines have been defeated and removed from the area, the seeds to the wildflowers can be sowed in the bare area. Once the seeds hit the ground, their magic begins. As the seeds touch the ground, they attach themselves with thin green plant-like arms and begin growing. Within moments small brightly colored flowers begin to appear bringing new life to the area.

Searching the druids' bodies have the following treasure: a scimitar, a quarterstaff, a small cloth pouch with 28gp, and a *potion of growth*.

AREA 2: DEFILED POND

Read the following description when the players enter the area:

The pathway leads to a recently cleared area with the scent of sulfur heavy in the air. The water in the pond has a thick appearance of dark vegetation growing on top and the only movement detected are the air bubbles rising to the surface. The heavy scent of sulfur seems to be coming from the bubbles as they pop upon the surface of the water.

AREA A

The 15-foot-wide path leading to the pond has 4 **vine blights** on edges of the path. They attack any creature that enters the path, starting with the nearest one.

AREA B

Residing within the pond is a **shambling mound** lying in wait for its next victim to approach. As soon as any creature gets within 15 ft. of the pond or if the water is disturbed in any way, the shambling mound will exit the water and attack the nearest creature. If the shambling mound engulfs a creature, it will drag it back in the water and swim to the bottom of the pond.

The pond is 30 feet deep and heavily obscured. When the flasks are poured into the water, it will take 1d4 hours for the water to clear, with the first effect being the elimination of the sulfur scent emanating from it. The water will slowly begin to clear, revealing the bottom littered with multiple humanoid skeletons and gear.

A creature can enter the water once it has been cleared and retrieve the following treasure: a leather sack containing loose coins totalling 62 gp, 23 sp, and 50 cp, a +1 *scimitar*, a stone figurine of a satyr playing a flute (75 gp), and a glass flask with a cork and wax seal containing a *potion of greater healing*.

AREA 3: FORGOTTEN GUARDIAN

Read the following description when the players enter the area:

The area opens to a 50 ft. wide opening with a large tree stretching upward over 20 ft. high. Its leafless branches spread out 15 ft. from its center. A lifeless body hangs in the tree and appears to have been impaled by a branch. A giant vulture is perched near the top, settled in the branches.

A DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) or Wisdom (Perception) check can determine humanoid footprints can be seen around the tree and some sort of confrontation occurred. As soon as the adventurers are spotted by the **giant vulture** it will take to the sky and circle from above. The giant vulture will only attack if provoked and will retreat if near death.

The large tree in this area was once a guardian of the forests, but the corruption of the land from being in this domain has turned this **treant** into an evil creature, with the same blighted appearance of the surrounding land. The treant will only attack if an aggressive action is taken against it.

The lifeless body on the branch can be determined to be a druid with a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The characters can determine with a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Survival) check the druid was likely trying to remove the treant, was unable to escape, and died.

Once the treant is defeated, the body can be searched to reveal the following treasure: a *bag of beans* (8 beans), a leather pouch containing 25 gp, and an ivory scroll case containing a *scroll of call lightning* and a *scroll of heat metal*.

Once the treant is removed and the sapling planted, visible signs of the sapling growth can be seen immediately as leaves begin to develop and the branches begin to stretch upward.

WRAPPING UP THE ADVENTURE

Once the party completes the tasks the druids had planned to complete, the area will quickly begin to bloom and thrive. The change in the area may attract the denizens of the area that will desire to return it back to its previous blighted nature. What creatures might arrive to reclaim the area is up to the Dungeon Master.

If the players return to Frax, they find him deceased with a spear embedded in his dead body and multiple humanoid footprints leading away. Where the footprints lead can be the seeds to the characters' next adventure.



MORDACITY IN MARKOVIA

AN ADVENTURE FOR FOUR TO SIX CHARACTERS OF 4TH LEVEL

Written by Aaron "VeX" Gentry



MARKOVIA

The island of Markovia is a wild and untamed tropical island filled with horrors unimaginable. The dread lord Dr. Frantisek Markov has spent his life transforming the animals and humanoids of the island into hybrids using magical and surgical means.

INTRODUCTION

In *Mordacity in Markovia*, the characters are on the run from several different beastmen through the strange tropical forest of Markovia. There are several adventure hooks for why they are on the run to allow the DM to adapt this adventure into many different campaigns.

The adventure is intended to fit a party of four to six characters of 4th level. However, it can be adapted easily for characters of a higher level by adding additional beastmen to the combat encounters.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Most of the beastmen who inhabit the island outside of Markov's mansion compound have gone beyond madness and are near-feral, having lost most of what made them humanoid. In addition to the surgical and magical "enhancements" Markov has done to the native population of the island, he also purposefully released several different forms of lycanthropy into the wild, some of which are unique to Markovia.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Below are three different ways you can hook the characters into the extended chase of *Mordacity in Markovia*.

TRANSPLANT

While the characters are in another dread domain of Ravenloft, perhaps they have upset a powerful creature or another dread lord. As punishment, they have been dropped into Markovia with little to no warning or preparation.

ACCIDENT

While the characters were elsewhere in Ravenloft, they were attempting something mysterious, magical, and dangerous. An accident occurred and the characters were pulled into a misty rift of the dread domains, magically transporting them to Markovia.

INTENTIONAL

The characters found something which promised to transport them away from wherever they were to the lush land of Markovia. Intentionally activating the magical transport, they found themselves in Markovia.





ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This adventure finds the characters starting the adventure falling out of a portal at 15,000 feet and falling quickly towards the island of Markovia below. The portal magically enchants the characters with a *featherfall* spell that becomes active when they are 500 feet from the ground.

During their mad freefall, they can observe the island from a great height, noticing the two different areas where there are settlements on the island, which should give them a choice on where they want to go. From the moment they touch the ground though, they will be pursued by mad beastmen intent on killing them.

They are pursued by several different groups of beastmen. The characters can choose to fight each of these groups or run from them. Chase rules are provided for each encounter as well as a number of maps for use in battle encounters if the characters choose to fight the beastmen.

Ultimately, the characters should be able to reach their destination, but it should be an eventful and colorful journey.

FREEFALL ARRIVAL

If you use one of the provided adventure hooks above, the characters arrive tumbling and falling out of a portal in the sky fifteen-thousand feet above the island of Markovia.

However, if your characters are already in Markovia and you want to drop this adventure into the middle of their campaign there, you can do so by skipping this section or by coming up with a unique reason for why they are tumbling out of a portal above Markovia. Much of the text of this adventure assumes the characters have never been to Markovia, but you should be able to quickly change those descriptions as necessary.

ARRIVAL

To start the adventure, read the following description to start the mad freefall from the sky:

Your magical travel through the portal ends abruptly with the troublesome feeling of tumbling through the air with the sound of the whipping wind all around you and the mist and clouds in your vision. After a few seconds, the mists around you begin clearing and your tumbling seems to lessen, though you are still madly falling fast towards the ground far below.

You find yourself thousands of feet in the sky, quickly moving vertically towards the ground--an island--far below. Through the clearing mists, you can see the island is mostly a mix of tropical jungle and rough terrain. Only two areas appear to show signs of civilized settlement.

To the south, a walled settlement perched on some high mountain cliffs. And to the northwest, what appears to be a mansion compound surrounded by several fields of farmland.

LANDING

While the characters fall, give them an opportunity to take actions to possibly stop or slow their descent. It is possible that one of the characters might possess a flying speed, but probably cannot stop all the other characters from falling. You might allow the flying character to make a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to slow their fall to a speed that is survivable though.

Additionally, a character may possess the means to cast *featherfall* on the party, saving their lives. If the party has no means to save themselves from the disastrous fall, that's alright, because the portal isn't designed to kill travelers who go through it, only instill a bit of terror.

When any creature comes through the portal gets and within 500 feet of the ground, they are enchanted with the *featherfall* spell.

This should come as a surprise and relief to the characters in freefall.

As this happens, read the following description:

As you fall closer and closer to the island, a canopy of trees appears to be where you will impact at extreme velocity. But as you cringe and your mind races for a last-minute solution to the problem, you feel yourself slowing, your fall arrested as if a magical force has slowed you to a comfortable ten feet per second descent.

It takes a few moments, but you realize that the portal itself must be designed not to kill travellers who come through it, only give them a nice scare.

As you descend through the trees, you can push off of branches and change your course, but ultimately still come to rest on the ground and find yourself in the dim light of a jungle beneath the canopy of leaves and tree limbs above.

Any rangers or druids in the party should immediately recognize the strange mixture of plants in this forest. It is tropically warm and the trees are tall and rainforest-like, but there are also several other plants and trees that would be more at home in a temperate rainforest than a tropical one.

A DC 14 Intelligence (Nature) check will allow the character to surmise this island was previously in a colder, more temperate climate, but is now adapting to it's new tropical climate.

DESTINATION

The characters may have already discussed their destination during freefall, but most likely not. Now that they are relatively safe on the ground, you may need to prompt them where they wish to go.

No matter which destination they choose, either going south towards the walled settlement on the cliffs (the *Monastery of the Lost*), or the mansion surrounded by farms to the north (the *Markov Mansion*), the encounters the characters will face play out in the same order. Even if the players change their minds and change direction during their travel, the order of the encounters remains the same.

CENTAUR HUNTERS

The first challenge the characters should face is four **feral centaurs**. These centaurs are more beast than man, incapable of speaking any languages but their own guttural tongue and uninterested in anything the characters have to say. They saw the characters fall from the sky and have been hunting them for several hours when they first make themselves known to the characters.

When you wish to start this encounter, read the following description to the players:

Moving through the thick jungle forest is arduous, but not impossible. The sounds of the birds and beasts in the jungle canopy above are a constant reminder of the wildlife that is teeming all around you, yet cannot see.

After several miles of travel you come to a small clearing filled with tall grasses. As you move through the clearing, you suddenly realize the sounds of the birds and other creatures in the forest have fallen still.

Something else is out there in the trees ...

THE HUNTERS ATTACK

Allow the characters to make a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check. If successful, they spot the hunting centaurs. Otherwise, the centaurs have surprise when they start their attack.

If the characters choose to run from the centaurs, use the chase format found in the section below marked **Jungle Chase**. Otherwise, combat starts. For this encounter, the centaurs will give chase until they either catch at least one of the characters or until they begin getting exhausted from taking the Dash action.

If you wish to use a battle map for this encounter, several jungle maps have been provided and can be found in **Appendix B: Maps**, we suggest the *Jungle Clearing* map. Put the player characters in the center of the map and place the centaurs on the edges of the map in the opposite direction from where the players are travelling, as if the centaurs were following them.



CENTAUR LOOT

Characters who choose to stay and fight can search the fallen feral centaurs with a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check. A successful search finds three longbows, thirty arrows, 50 ft. of hemp rope, twelve bars of crushed dried fruit (12 days rations), and a pouch with two rough emeralds (50 gp each) and one tiny polished amethyst (100 gp).

GNOLL PACK

The second challenge the characters encounter is a pack of gnolls. This particular challenge can result in a chase, combat, or a stealth skill encounter where the characters avoid the gnoll pack altogether. Or it can be a combination of those three options.

STUMBLING UPON GNOLLS

If the characters are moving with stealth, read the following description to the players:

As you creep through the woods, your silence is sufficient that you can hear something else moving through the jungle. As you peek past a thicket of bushes, you see a half-dozen hyena men--gnolls--tramping down a rough path. It appears as though their guttural speech and loud behavior prevented them from detecting your stealthy approach.

If the characters choose to avoid the gnolls, have each of them make a DC 13 Dexterity (Stealth) check. If any of the characters fail, read the following description:

The quietest among you quickly sneak behind the passing gnoll pack across the worn path, but then someone steps on a dry branch hidden beneath the grasses and it loudly *SNAPS!*

It is then that you see one of the gnolls turning back and yelling out a warning in their guttural yipping language.

HYENAMEN FIGHT

If the characters choose to attack, give them surprise. The gnoll pack consists of 2 **gnoll hunters**, 2 **gnolls**, and 1 **gnoll pack lord**. If you wish to use a battle map for this encounter, several jungle maps have been provided and can be found in **Appendix B: Maps**, we suggest the *Jungle Path* map. Put the player characters on the edge of the map and the gnolls spread throughout the center along the path.

In the case where the gnolls catch the characters trying to sneak behind them, neither side has surprise. Put most of the gnolls at one end of the map along the path with one of the gnoll hunters trailing behind as if he moved to check to see if someone was following them and caught the characters attempting to sneak behind them. Then put some of the characters on one side of the path and the one(s) who failed the Dexterity (Stealth) check on the other side.

If the characters win their fight against the gnolls they can search the fallen gnolls with a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check. A successful search finds 4 spears, 1 glaive, 20 arrows, 1 set of leather armor, two sacks containing thirty pounds of fresh raw meat, and a pouch containing 157 gp, 36 sp, and 48 cp.

RUN DOWN BY THE PACK

If the characters ever decide to run from the gnolls, use the **Jungle Chase** rules found below. The gnolls will give chase for a maximum of six rounds before giving up. When this happens, read the following description to the players:

After a short time running away from the gnolls, you enter an area of the jungle with scattered stone ruins, most appear to be small stone buildings overgrown with jungle plants, long abandoned and crumbling.

But more importantly, you notice that the gnolls seem to have broken off their pursuit.

The characters may take a moment to attempt to figure out why the gnolls broke off their chase. If a character attempts to look for tracks in the area, they may attempt a DC 18 Wisdom (Survival) check. If they are successful, read the following to the players:

Spending several minutes searching the immediate area, you find a pair of footprints in the mud. They appear to be large feline footprints with the indentation of large claws.

These footprints hint at the next challenge, two werepanthers that claim these ruins as their territory. It was for this reason the gnolls did not follow the characters into the area of the ruins.

If any of the characters were thoughtful enough and successful in finding the werepanther tracks, they will have advantage in any Dexterity (Stealth), Wisdom (Perception), or Wisdom (Survival) checks made during the final challenge.



POUNCING PANTHERS

The third and final challenge comes in the form of an attack from a pair of werepanther mates. Within moments of the characters entering the ruins, the werepanthers became aware of their presence and began tracking them.

MAKING CAMP

When the characters enter the area of the ruins and have had time to search the area for information if they wish to, read the following description:

After a long day of travel through the island's jungle, you have found an area scattered with stone ruins, overgrown with plant life. But as you move through the ruins, the day's light begins to fade quickly into darkness. Night approaches rapidly.

Ask the players if they wish to camp for the night or continue walking through the night. Continuing without a long rest will give them each a level of *exhaustion*.

If they do choose to continue and take the level of exhaustion, the werepanthers will follow and choose another time to unleash their trap upon the characters. In most cases though, the players will choose to rest for the night.

PANTHER STRIKE

The two **werepanthers** will wait to strike when only one or two of the characters are awake. These werepanthers, like all lycanthropes in Markovia, cannot change to human form.

If you wish to use a battle map for this encounter, several jungle maps have been provided and can be found in **Appendix B: Maps**, we suggest the *Jungle Camp* map. Put the player characters in the camp area. The werepanthers will attack from opposite sides of the camp, one from behind the tent, the other from between the ruins and the large tree to the south.

When you are ready to start the attack, have the characters who are awake make a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check. If they fail, the werepanthers can start the attack with surprise.

If the characters choose to run, starting a chase, the werepanthers will pursue until the characters get away or until they catch and kill all of the characters, even if that means tracking and hunting them down at a later time.

If the characters win their fight against the werepanthers, they can search the two bodies with a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check. A successful search finds 4 silver shortswords, 2 mithral chain shirts, a pouch containing 82 gp, 12 sp, and 19 cp, and a second pouch containing three polished tiger's eyes (150 gp each). If the characters remove either of the mithral chain shirts, read the following to the players:

As you remove one of the mithral chain shirts, you find a small worn leather-bound book in a hidden pocket on the inside of the armor.

If they choose to read the book, read the following description to the players:

Reading the book, you realize it is the panther-man's diary. In several entries you read, there is reference to a hide--the panther's hidden home--here within the ruins. After reading enough of the diary, you think you know where it is located.

PANTHER HIDE

If the characters search out the werepanther's hide, they can find it fairly easily using the descriptions found in the werepanther's diary.

When they approach the hide, read the following description to the players:

Climbing up a leaning vine-covered ruin wall, you can see a hidden ladder hanging from a particularly bushy tree. Climbing from the wall to the ladder and further up, you find yourself in a well-crafted tree-house that consists of several levels.

The house has comfortable furniture and is well hidden by the tree and surrounding foliage. On the top level, you can see out for several miles in all directions and can observe the entire area of the ruins.

Searching the treehouse, the characters can easily find gathered fruits, vegetables, and cured meats to survive here for several weeks.



JUNGLE CHASE

In any of the encounters, the characters may choose to run from the beastmen involved. If that happens, used the rules for running a *Chase* found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* on page 252 using the following **Jungle Chase Complications** table to roll for hazards each round. As a reminder, keep the following rules in mind:

Exhaustion. You can use the Dash action a number of times equal to 3 + your Constitution modifier. For each Dash action after that you must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution check or take one level of exhaustion. Your speed becomes 0 when you reach level 5. This includes the NPCs.

Hazards. Every round, there is a chance the characters or NPCs will encounter a hazard. Each round, roll on the following table and have each chase participant make the required save or skill check, if necessary.

Ending the Chase. Each of the encounters above has conditions for when the pursuing beastmen will stop the chase in addition to the rules for ending the chase found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

JUNGLE CHASE COMPLICATIONS

1d20	Type	Complication
1	Fallen Tree	Make a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (your choice) to get past the impediment. On a failed check, the object counts as 5 feet of difficult terrain.
2	Cramped Space	Make a DC 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to get through this space. On a failed check, the obstacle counts as 10 feet of difficult terrain.
3	Thick Vines	Make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, you are tangled in the vines and restrained until the start of your next turn.
4	Pit or Ravine	Make a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (your choice) to jump over the obstacle. On a failed check you fall prone in the pit and must spend 10 feet of movement to climb out.
5	Log Over Stream	Make a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to cross the stream by running over the log. On a failed check, the obstacle counts as 10 feet of difficult terrain.
6	Crowd of Monkeys	Make a DC 12 Charisma (Intimidation) or Wisdom (Animal Handling) check (your choice) to make your way through the crowd unimpeded. On a failed check, the crowd counts as 10 feet of difficult terrain and you take 2d4 bludgeoning damage.
7	Thorn Bushes	Make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw to avoid it. On a failed save, the terrain counts as 10 feet of difficult terrain and you take 2d4 piercing damage.
8	Vine Swing	You can choose to make a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Strength (Athletics) check. If you choose not to make the check, you continue moving without impediment. If you choose to swing on the vines and succeed, you can move an additional 30 feet during this turn. If you choose to swing on the vines and fail, you fall prone on the ground and cannot move this round.
9	Uneven Ground	Make a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to navigate the area. On a failed check, the ground counts as 10 feet of difficult terrain.
10	Muddy Slope	Make a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. On a failed check, the slope counts as 15 feet of difficult terrain. On a successful check, you slide down the muddy slope, gaining 30 feet of additional movement this round.
11-20	No	Complication

WRAPPING UP THE ADVENTURE

Once the characters have either escaped or defeated all three challenge encounters along the way, they can reach their destination. What they find in those locations is entirely up to the Dungeon Master to determine. If sufficient information about these locations is not provided in *Van Richten's Guide to Ravenloft*, we suggest using the [Markovia](#) entries on Mistipedia as a possible source.

The island of Markovia is ripe for adventures involving beastmen and untamed wild tropical forests.



BLOOD AND RUBIES

AN ADVENTURE FOR FOUR TO SIX CHARACTERS OF 5TH LEVEL.

Written by Jack "IAmTheMooNow" Duncan



AGGARATH

The domain of Aggarath is likely the smallest of the domains of dread as it is contained completely within the hilt of a dagger of the same name. The dagger was once fully ruled and dominated by its dark lord, Chardath Spulzeer. But that time has long since passed as the dagger, and therefore the plane within, has been damaged. The realm no longer reflects the psyche of the dark lord, but those trapped within.

INTRODUCTION

In the *Blood and Rubies*, the characters are trapped within the realm of Aggarath. To escape, the characters must make their way through its maze of interconnected demi-planar spaces, facing the darkest aspects of their character, or being overwhelmed by them.

This adventure is intended to fit a party of four to six characters of 5th level. But it could easily be adapted for characters of higher level by adding additional creatures or creatures of greater power.

CONTENT WARNING

This adventure explores concepts of trauma, particularly in childhood. Make sure to speak with your players before running this adventure to make sure they are all comfortable roleplaying these concepts.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

This adventure is based in the realm of Aggarath, the domain and prison of Chardath Spulzeer. Chardath was driven to madness long ago, when a spirit possessed his body and forced him to kill his beloved sister so the spirit could regain its form as a lich.

After many clashes with the lich, a final confrontation between the lich and Chardath saw Chardath drawn into the realm of Aggarath, his shattered mind giving shape to the formless realm within.

But even this brief period of domination over a tiny realm was fleeting. By some unknown means, the ruby in Aggarath's hilt has cracked, breaking much of Chardath's hold on the realm.

Chardath can feel his hold on the realm slipping, as it no longer reflects his thoughts and memories but those of the souls trapped within. He hungers for nothing more than enough souls to repair his realm, so he may scheme to destroy his hated lich foe once more.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Below are two different ways you can draw the characters into Aggarath.

MURDERED

While the characters are going about their normal adventuring activities the worst happens, they are all reduced to 0 hit points and knocked unconscious.

As an alternative to a TPK, you could have one of the creatures the characters are fighting pull out a strange silver dagger with a ruby in its hilt, and slay the characters with it while they lie unconscious, thus drawing their souls into that dread realm and giving them a chance at escape.

SO HUNGRY

The characters find the dagger Aggarath on the body of a defeated enemy, for sale from a mysterious merchant, or in an ancient ruin.

After the characters take the dagger, Chardath stirs in his prison, releasing a sudden burst of power that draws all the characters into the weapon.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This adventure consists of a maze of interconnected demi-planar spaces. These spaces are mostly tests for the characters, attempts to force them to give up aspects of their personality to escape past or present pain.

The characters must seek out one of the enchanted rubies and take it to the correct place within the maze to have any chance of escaping. To do so they must pass by the lord of the domain, who will attempt to trick them into thinking they must defeat him to leave, but in reality he is impotent and incapable of stopping the characters from progressing if they simply choose to ignore him.

This is an extremely roleplay-heavy quest, and its success will hinge largely on the DM's ability to tailor each space to match the characters in the party. Included at the start of the adventure are a series of questions the DM may wish to ask players to get a better idea of how to torment the characters during their time in Aggarath.



BLOOD AND RUBIES

In this description of the adventure, it is assumed that the party is composed of 5th-level adventurers and that they have already been trapped within Aggarath.

DRAINED

Aggarath attempts to drain the characters of their emotions to absorb their souls. It does this by forcing them to live out trauma from their past or imagined failures in their future. Characters gain a flaw whenever they are overcome by one of these challenges, if a character gains 2 flaws or is slain, they are consumed by Aggarath and lost forever.

Each facet focuses on a different single player character, using that character's trauma, self-doubt etc. to create its challenge. Attempt to rotate through all the characters, so no one player becomes the continued focus.

TRAUMA AND FEARS

To run this adventure effectively, it is important to know your player's characters quite well. Consider asking each of the players the following questions about their characters before running this adventure:

- When did your character lose their innocence?
- What was your character's proudest achievement?
- What was your character's favorite or least favorite story from their childhood?
- Who does your character love the most in all the world?
- What is the worst thing your character has ever done?

NAVIGATING THE FACETS

If the characters travel to a facet they have already faced, the monoliths that appeared at the end of the scene are still standing there waiting, the characters do not need to repeat the trial of the facet again.

A1. THE FIRST FACET

The characters arrive in the first facet when they enter Aggarath. They awaken as if from a deep sleep. All around them, an endless plain of glass-like ruby stretches off into eternity. The black sky above is featureless, except for a jagged white line, like a crack, stretching from horizon to horizon. Every few seconds, arcs of crimson lightning dance across the sky.

If the characters wander, they find nothing, the plain is literally endless. The ruby plain is indestructible, and no attempt to damage it will work. This continues until one of the characters casts a spell. When they do, the spell slot is expended but the spell fails and the magical energy of the spell arcs out of their hand into the sky as crimson lightning. The characters see the power travel directly upwards, before bouncing off an unseen barrier far above. For every level of the spell, up to 3rd, an arc of lightning crashes into the ground around the caster. Each arc of lightning causes a single monolith, 8ft. tall and 2 ft. wide, to raise from the ground, composed likewise of ruby. Each monolith is linked to either Area A2, A7 or A8. If the characters cast a spell lower than 3rd level, determine the facet the monoliths link to at random.

The monolith linked to A2 has the word "Innocence" in Common on its surface. The monolith linked to A3 has the word "Doom" in Common on its surface. The monolith linked to A8 has the word "Sin" in Common on its surface. Touching a monolith instantly teleports that character to its facet.

A2. THE SECOND FACET (INNOCENCE)

The focus of this facet is the character with the starkest story of lost innocence. The characters in this facet see the focus character's memory of losing their innocence. Describe the situation under which the character lost their innocence, exaggerating the moments and impressions of the scene and people involved; if the loss was a moment of betrayal, make the betrayer particularly monstrous, if it was the first time the character saw a dead body, make the body exaggeratedly rotten or otherwise grizzly. The sight of such a traumatic memory affects the focus character greatly, forcing them to make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or gain a level of exhaustion. Then the scene ends.

As the scene ends the characters find themselves back on a ruby plain, this time beside a cliff over an endless dark void. A humanoid figure made of shadows holds a child made of glowing golden light over the abyss. The child is screaming and attempting to break free from the shadow's grip, but cannot.

If one of the characters was the focus of the lost innocence, the child is recognizably that character. Read the following to the players:

The shadowy figure whispers, "Innocence once lost is lost forever, but the pain, the pain can be eased. Would you like your pain eased?"

If the focus character refuses, have the characters roll initiative as the figure releases the child. Roll initiative for the child and the figure, who has the statistics of a **wraith**. The child falls at the start of its turn, but can be saved if the characters are fast enough or come up with some other way of catching the child. The wraith attempts to stop the characters, fighting them until slain. If the child is saved, it merges with the focus character, or rises into the sky laughing if there is no focus. If it merges with a character they gain the *Charm of Heroism* as found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* on pg. 228.





If a character accepts the figure's offer, the wraith and child vanish, and light is drawn from that character's body into the ground. The character gains the flaw, "I am cynical and mistrustful."

Regardless of the outcome, three more ruby monoliths arise from the ground in flashes of crimson lighting when combat ends. One is emblazoned with the number "1", leading to Area A1, one is marked with the word "Glory" in Common and leads to Area A3, the last is marked with the word "Stories" and leads to Area A4.

A3. THE THIRD FACET (GLORY)

The focus of this facet is the concept of glory. Like in facet A2, describe a scene of one of the character's proudest achievements. Exaggerate the moment: increase the feat, the cheers of the onlookers, the grateful cries of the saved, the grandeur of the discovery, etc.

Lull the characters into a false sense of security describing the brightness of the scene and happiness they feel seeing it. Then twist everything. If the character's greatest achievement was slaying a bandit captain, show the bandit's family sobbing over the corpse. If the achievement was a discovery, show the unintended disastrous side-effects.

Don't feel constrained by truth in this scene, simply take things to the worst possible, and most emotionally devastating conclusion. The focus character must make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or gain a point of exhaustion.

A figure appears as the scene ends, a glowing and glorious version of the focus character. To the focus character, the figure says:

"You are unworthy. You could be so much more, we could be so much more. Take my hand and I will help you reach your true potential."

If the focus character accepts, they gain the flaw, "I seek self-improvement at the expense of everything else." While they have this flaw, they gain +2 to an ability score of their choice. The figure then disappears, merging with the focus character, before light passes out of the character into the floor.

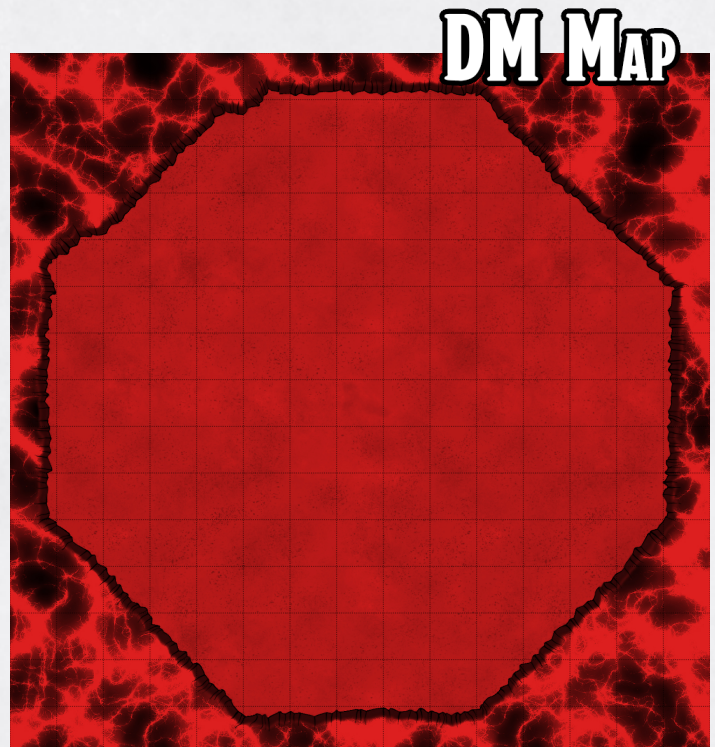
If the characters refuse, the figure attacks, it has the statistics of a **gladiator**. A single bright red light glows at the figure's center, one of the rubies the characters require to leave this place. It falls to the ground when the figure is slain.

If the offer is accepted or the figure is slain, a single monolith rises from the ruby ground. It has the word "Innocence" written on it in Common and leads to Area A2.

A4. THE FOURTH FACET (STORIES)

The focus of this facet is stories. Pick a character as the focus whose player described an interesting story from their childhood. The scene that appears is a quick retelling of the character's favorite or least favorite story, twisted into a grotesque form.

Have the heroes fail, i.e., the dragon slays the knight, the prince rejects the princess, etc.. Step things up even further, have the dragon descend on the knight's village, slaying all in sight. Have the princess fly into a murderous rage and stab the prince to death with her hair pin. The focus character will realise that their memory of this story is being warped, so that they now remember it only in this new terrible form.



This scene does not end, but simply restarts. This time all the story's characters are blood crazed monsters, the conversations replaced by brutal violence, the heroics replaced with terrible acts of betrayal. The scene keeps replaying, each time more violent than the last, until the scene opens on an orgy of bloodletting and slaughter.

If the characters try to intervene to stop the violence, two of the story characters turn on the characters, transforming into monstrous mockeries of their true forms.

"Stories are but lies we tell to hide what we truly are, the beasts that lie within!" they intone as one.
"Or would you prefer the lie?"

If the focus character says they do, light passes out of them into the floor and they gain the flaw, "I never tell the truth when I can tell a lie."

If the character refuses, the monstrous characters attack. They have the statistics of **hook horrors**.

If the offer is accepted or the monstrous characters slain, two monoliths rise from the ground. One has the word "Love" written on it in Common and leads to Area A5, the other has the word "Innocence" written on it in Common and leads to Area A2.

5. THE FIFTH FACET (LOVE)

The focus of this facet is love. Pick a character as the focus whose character loves someone truly and dearly. This scene shows a moment of tenderness and/or intimacy between the character and the person they love. This can be anything from a character's mother kissing them on the forehead, a beloved teacher praising the character's work, or a lover embracing the character before a fire.

The scene fades back to an empty ruby plain. Two monoliths rise from the ground, one is marked with the word "Piety" and leads to Area A6, the other is marked with the word "Stories" and leads to Area A4.

If the characters move to leave, they hear the sounds of someone screaming in pain. The screams are recognisably coming from the subject of the focus character's love. That character must make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw if they choose to ignore it. On a failure, they feel an intense need to investigate the screaming, but are not compelled to do so. If they leave without investigating they gain a level of exhaustion. On a success the character is unaffected.

If the characters follow the screams to their source they find the person the focus character loves encased in a ruby, screaming in agony. A voice whispers in that character's mind:

"You have been here for some time, I decided to get you some company."
The voice pauses, letting the screams continue, then asks, "Shall I free them?"

If the focus character refuses, the person the character loves bursts from the crystal and attacks. It has the statistics of a **vampire spawn**.

If the character accepts, the ruby melts away and the figure inside cackles madly as they too melt. Light rushes from the focus character and they gain the flaw, "I will do literally anything for love."

6. THE SIXTH FACET (PIETY)

This facet has been shattered by the damage to Aggarath. The ground is made of jagged rubies and is difficult terrain. Any character knocked prone in this facet takes 1d4 piercing damage from the jagged ground.

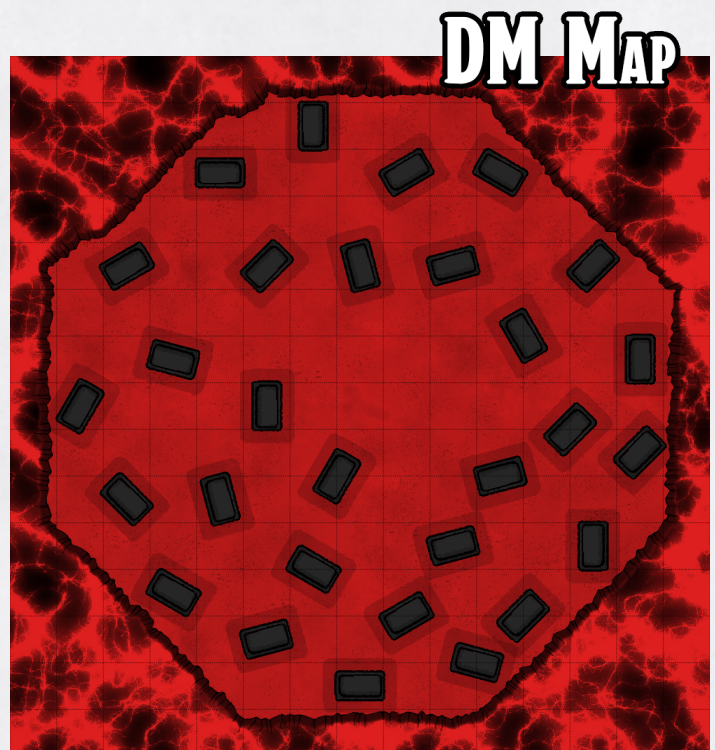
Two **earth elementals**, composed entirely of the same ruby as the ground, wander this facet. They are on either side of the characters, in opposite directions. They don't notice the characters when they first appear, but are hostile to all creatures. When slain, the elemental merges with the ground a monolith emerges from the ground, either leading to Area A7 and marked with "Doom", or leading to Area A5 and marked with "Love".

7. THE SEVENTH FACET (DOOM)

The seventh facet resembles the first, but is covered in monoliths from horizon to horizon. Each monolith contains a silently screaming figure like in A5, but these figures are real souls trapped here. Each one is the soul of someone who has found themselves absorbed by Aggarath.

If any of the characters have been lost to this realm, the surviving characters may find them within this place. The ruby monoliths are indestructible, but if a character touches a monolith and offers to swap places with the person within, the two characters exchange places. There is no other method for extracting a soul from this place, and no clues for the characters to hint at this possibility.

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check is required to find a monolith leading out of the facet, the search taking an hour.





Spending more than an hour among these silently screaming figures is mentally taxing. Have each character roll a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw, gaining a level of exhaustion on a failure. Repeat this save each hour the monolith isn't found, increasing the DC by 1. Determine the monolith they find at random, either leading to Area A6 and marked with the word "Piety", leading to Area A11 and marked with the word "Throne" or leading to Area A1 and marked with the number "1".

8. THE EIGHTH FACET (GUILT)

This facet is formed from guilt. Pick the character with the most terrible guilt in their past, or the one who would have their reputation most tarnished by their guilt's exposure. Simply describe the act the character feels guilty about in full detail, adding no embellishments.

At the end of the scene, have the version of the focus character playing out the scene speak to the focus character:

"This guilt can be scrubbed away. The guilt, the very act itself, would you wish it cleansed from your mind? For what is an act in the past if not remembered? Nothing at all."

If the character refuses, their reflection melts into a black ooze. This pool has the statistics of a **black pudding** and attacks.

If the character accepts, the memories of the focus character's guilt is removed from them and all the other characters must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or also forget what they saw. Light passes from the character into the ground, and they gain the flaw, "I am incapable of feeling guilt for my actions."

With the scene resolved, two monoliths rise from the ruby ground once again. One leads to Area A1 and is marked with the number "1", the other leads to Area A9 and is marked with the word "Memories".

9. THE NINTH FACET (MEMORIES)

The ninth facet is formed from memories. This chamber resembles a vast library full of empty book shelves. When the characters arrive in this facet they do so having lost all their memories, all of their alignments are neutral and they have no personality traits, ideals, bonds or flaws. But they retain their proficiencies and ability scores.

Searching the library requires a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Doing so takes an hour, and yields a number of books equal to the number of characters. Each book contains the personality and memories of one of the other characters and a character opening the book immediately gains that personality, the book destroyed in the process.

They do not gain that character's proficiencies however. For example, a wizard who has just gained the personality and memories of a fighter will not suddenly have the muscle memory to use a sword, nor will they lose their ability to cast spells that they have learned through much practice. Likewise, a barbarian who gains the personality and memories of a cleric will find the religious rituals required for cleric spells fuzzy in their mind, and will not gain access to such abilities.

This will likely end up with the characters mixing up some or all of their personalities. How you, as the DM, handle this is up to you. The players can be left to do impressions of each other's characters, as the fussy wizard's personality is suddenly in the body of the rowdy barbarian. Or you could have the players swap character sheets, each player moving with their character's personality rather than staying with their body.

Before choosing the second option, make sure to clear it with your players. If even one player seems uncomfortable with entrusting their character to another player do not take this option and simply have the players do impressions of each other's characters instead. Controlling another player's character is a sign of deep trust, and is not for every adventuring party.

Once the books are all found and read, two monoliths appear as the library dissolves, one leading back to Area A8, marked with "Guilt" and one leading to Area A10, marked with "Madness".

10. THE TENTH FACET (MADNESS)

This facet is made from the insanity of the characters. If none of them have gained any flaws from this place, it appears as a simple ruby plain, like Area A1, with a monolith appearing behind them leading back to Area A9 and a small plinth with a single loose ruby rising from the ground before them. This is one of the rubies the characters can use to leave this realm.

If the characters have gained flaws, this realm is a twisted place of swirling madness. Fires rage that turn into ice before melting into air and crystallizing into stone all around the ruby floor. The plinth, the ruby and the monolith remain, but also present are each of the figures the characters have made deals with to gain their flaws, kneeling as if in prayer in a 10 ft. diameter circle around the plinth. Slaying these figures removes the associated flaw, but attacking any one turns all hostile.

11. THE ELEVENTH FACET (THRONE)

The eleventh facet is Chardath Spulzeer's throne room. The chamber is a 100 ft. wide hexagon, with a large throne encased in an indestructible ruby monolith at its center and two monoliths. One monolith leading back to Area A7 marked "Doom" and the other one marked with the word "Dais" leading to Area A12.

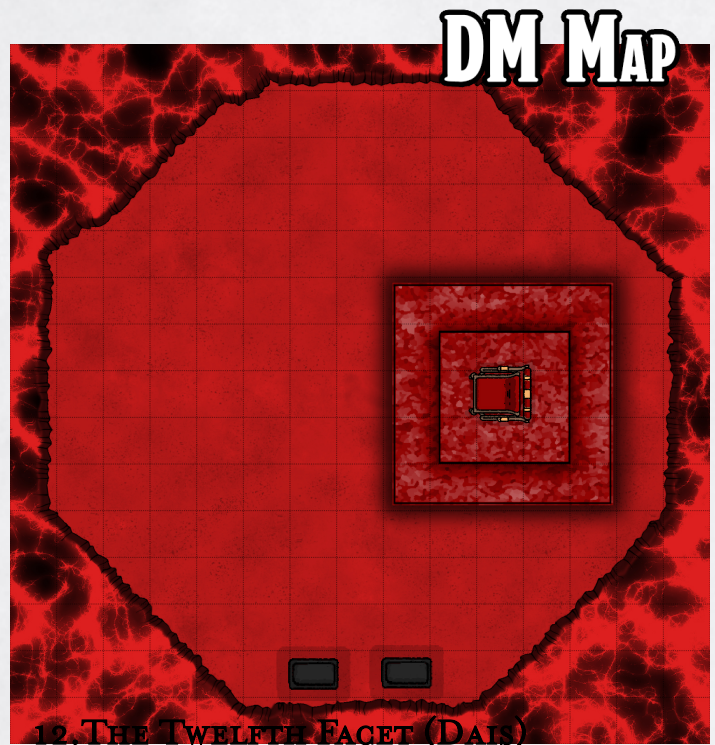
Read the following to the players:

Chardath looks down at you from his ruby throne as you enter, proclaiming, "You cannot pass until you have defeated me."

This is a lie, Chardath's powers are greatly diminished by the damage to Aggarath and he poses little threat to the characters in his current state as he cannot even rise from his throne. However, he requires souls to repair the realm, and will attempt to hold the characters in conversation as he strains to summon the spirits trapped in Area A7. It takes him a full minute to summon 1d6 of these spirits, during which he can engage in conversation, but with a note of effort in his voice detectable with a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Insight) check.

If any of the characters have been slain or otherwise had their souls trapped in Area A7, Chardath summons them to fight their former companions along with the spirits. The dead characters appear as they did in life, but with cracked rubies for eyes. Use the dead character's character sheet in combat, as they retain all their old abilities and class features as they were only recently consumed, but their creature type is undead. Alternatively, you can allow the dead character's player to control the character for you.

If the characters defeat Chardath's minions he simply begins summoning more, he cannot summon more before they are defeated. The way to win this encounter is simply to leave, abandoning the mad dark lord to his fate.



12. THE TWELFTH FACET (DAIS)

This facet appears just as Area A1, except for a raised silver dais a few feet before the characters. There is an aperture for a ruby in the dais and inserting one into it destroys the ruby, immediately teleporting all characters in this facet back to their bodies on the material plane.

WRAPPING UP THE ADVENTURE

The characters awaken back in their old bodies, with the number of hit points they had in Aggarath and find that no time has passed on the material plane. They may still have to deal with the wielder of the dagger, if they were attacked, but they are now immune to its effects. If any of the characters have exchanged bodies, they return to their original bodies upon leaving the dagger.

If any of their fellow adventurers were lost, or they simply wish to destroy the dagger, they may be able to find a way by delving deep into the forbidden lore found within Ravenloft's other realms, perhaps making a deal with one of the other dark lords to grant them dominion over Aggarath in exchange for freeing their friend's soul.



AGGARATH

Artifact (dagger), requires attunement

The dagger Aggarath is a curved blade of a strange silvery metal. Its hilt is elaborately decorated and inlaid with a cracked ruby at its pommel.

Sentience. The dagger is possessed by the spirit of Chardath Spulzeer, who communicates telepathically with its wielder. He is chaotic evil, and urges the character to commit acts of murder with the weapon.

Magic Weapon. You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magical weapon.

Soul Stealing. Any creature slain by Aggarath has its soul pulled into the ruby pommel on its hilt, which connects to the domain of dread of the same name. A creature whose soul is in that realm cannot be restored to life by any means. After slaying 100 humanoids with this blade, it becomes a +2 weapon. 100 more repairs the ruby, turning it into a +3 weapon.

Random Properties. Aggarath has the following random properties:

- 2 minor beneficial properties
- 2 minor detrimental properties
- 1 major detrimental property

DESTROYING AGGARATH

Aggarath may be destroyed only by two dark lords working in concert. Doing so frees all the souls trapped within the demi-plane.

THE RACE TO SHORE

AN ADVENTURE FOR FOUR TO SIX CHARACTERS OF 7TH TO 8TH LEVEL

Written by Darryl "Blokka" Lehane



SARAGOSS

Saragoss is a part of the Verdurous Lands. It's Darklord is Draga Saltibiter, a wereshark that can only remain above the waves for short periods of time. The Domain itself is a mass of seaweed and a tangle of broken ships. Dozens of shipwrecks are trapped in the seaweed. The Verdurous Lands cluster itself does not have a moon. Which means no tides to help move the ships caught in the tangle.

INTRODUCTION

In *The Race to the Shore* the players find themselves marooned in a strange tangle of seaweed and ships. In the distance they can spot what appears to be a shoreline of some kind and they must make for it. Something stalks them and should they dally a grim future awaits.

CONTENT WARNING

There will be some instances of sailors turned cannibal and zombies eating human flesh in this adventure. Where this occurs alternative text has been added, for those that may have trouble with graphic imagery. This text will downplay the gruesome nature of events.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

This adventure is based in Saragoss, a strange domain of dread consisting mainly of seaweed and the remains of countless ships. Many ships have sailed into the mists only to appear on the other side and become part of the mass of ships here.

The adventurers find themselves one in a long list to share this fate. This morning they were sailing through fair seas, this afternoon will see them running for their lives in a never ending battle against the denizens of Saragoss.

Can they make the shore? Or will they, like so many others, end up as food for the creatures of the tangle, or worse yet, denizens themselves!

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Below are two different ways you can hook the characters into this test of their survival skills.

SAILORS

The adventurers are sailors on the ship. Whether they are the ship's Weather Wizard, or onboard protection, maybe just a rogue hiding from the law by taking a ship's berth. However they came to be here, they now find themselves on a run to survive and save as many of their other crewmates as possible!

ON THEIR WAY TO NEW ADVENTURE

The characters are an adventuring group on their way to new adventure when their ship hits this strange mist that seems like it came out of nowhere. They now find themselves in an unforgiving land and an unknown doom stalks them. Can they make the shore? Can they save the crew? What horrors await them on the shore?

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This adventure is all about survival. The players have a limited amount of time to clear each deck and move onto the next.

They will be tested in their ability to quickly overcome enemies and also be required to navigate between ships, with the constant risk of a tumble into shark infested waters. Should they take too long the unknown terror coming up behind them will catch up and it will be all they can do just to survive an encounter with the dreaded wereshark that pursues them.

They will start just after their ship arrives in the tangle and be quickly attacked. Apart from themselves they must try and keep the crew safe, on each ship, for every round past the number of rounds they should take, one crew member will die, taken by the creatures that inhabit this desolate area of this domain of dread.



A ROUGH LANDING

Read the following to the players:

"We are clearing the fog Captain!" the first mate yells above the sounds of snapping canvas from the sails.

Beneath your feet you can feel the deck groaning as if in agony. The ship continues to pitch to and fro, like a drunk sailor after a three day bender. Just when you begin to think you may be safe finally, you hear the lookout above scream, "Hard to port! Ships run aground ahead. Now! Now! Now!" Before anyone can react you slam into something solid. The sounds of wood splintering and men screaming fills the air.

You are thrown to the ground, careening into the side rail and knocking the wind from your body.

Allow the players to regain their feet and take stock. They can easily see that they have smashed into another vessel, caught in a tangle of seaweed that spreads as far as the eye can see. A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check will allow a character to spot a shore line, or at least a possible shoreline some distance to the south of their current position. Looking in any other direction just reveals more ships and more seaweed.

TIME TO RUN

Read the following to the players:

Just as you begin to get your bearings, you hear a bellowing roar behind you further back in the tangle of ships. Answering roars and howls begin to well up from the vessels around you. Without having to be told, you know the truth:

You are now the hunted. Your only possibility of survival lies in getting away as quickly as you can.

ENCOUNTER OVERVIEW

This adventure will consist of 10 encounters: 7 random encounters, 2 mini boss fights, and 1 final boss encounter. The 7 random encounters will have a limited number of rounds to complete them without consequences, the 3 boss encounters will not. You can tell your players that they have limited time to complete each deck to add to the feeling of impending doom, but do not tell them how long they have, as it will then just be a race against a clock, not a race against an unknown threat.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

For these you will roll on the d100 table below. You will notice that each encounter had a round count. That is the number of rounds you will have to complete the battle before facing dire consequences.

INITIATIVE

At the start of combat, get the players to roll for Initiative. That roll will be their Initiative score for the entire adventure, as there will be no down time or rests in between battles.

THE CREW

The players start the adventure with 15 surviving crew members and **Captain Wilfred Trenchdigger**. **The Crew** will be treated as a single entity for the sake of combat rolls, but cannot be harmed directly by enemies.

Each sailor does 1d6 melee damage or 1d8 ranged damage, but you should use only one attack roll for all of them. This means the players will start with a companion that does 15d6 or 15d8 damage per attack. Each round the players go over the round counter for an encounter, you need to roll a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw for the crew. On a failed save, a tentacle comes out of the water and drags one of the sailors to their death, reducing the number by 1 and the damage by 1d6 or 1d8 respectively.



Captain Trenchdigger attacks on his own turn as an NPC. He can take damage, so the player's will need to try and keep him alive.

If all of the crew, including the Captain die, the party will start taking damage from tentacles coming out of the water. Have each of the players roll the same DC 12 Dexterity saving throw each round and take 1d4 damage per failed roll, for every deck they fail to clear before the round count runs out.

CLEARING THE DECKS

Once a ship is cleared, the players can spend two turns looking for magical items and then must move onto the next one. The timer still counts during these turns, so if one or both are outside of the timer, roll as above. Once the players have searched, roll on the random treasure table below to see what the players find.

MOVING BETWEEN SHIPS

The players must traverse between decks and over short distances of water to get to their destinations. For the sake of expediency, the captain and crew are assumed to make their jumps. The players must succeed with a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to make the next deck, otherwise they fall in between the ships and will need 1d4 turns to climb up onto the new ship.

If one or more make the next ship, the encounter starts and the player(s) that fell won't get onboard for the number of rounds. While climbing onboard they must also roll a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save they take 1d4 slashing damage from debris and sharks that are trying to pull them under.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

For these use the random encounter maps provided. The 3 boss encounters each have their own specialized maps. The encounters are based on a party of 5 players of 8th level. For smaller parties you may wish to remove 1 or 2 NPCs from some encounters and remember to utilize the crew and captain to help with the fights. The idea is to create the illusion of edge of your seat sudden death, without just killing the players off.

Roll on the table below to determine what threatens the characters face:



RANDOM SHIP ENCOUNTERS

1d100	Encounter	Threat Level	Number of Rounds
1	a drow mage and 2 drow	Easy	5
2-5	a grick alpha and 3 grick	Hard	9
6-10	a cyclops	Easy	5
11-12	5 turtle druid	Deadly	11
13-20	a sahuagin priestess and 7 sahuagin	Easy	5
21-23	a stone giant dreamwalker	Medium	7
24-28	2 canoloth	Deadly	11
29-30	a yuan-ti nightmare speaker and 7 yuan-ti pureblood	Medium	7
31-35	a vampiric mist and 5 ghouls	Easy	5
36-37	a corpse flower and a ghast	Easy	5
38-40	6 druid and a wood woad	Deadly	11
41-42	a young red dragon and 2 kobolds	Medium	7
43-44	a stone giant and 2 cave bear	Hard	9
45	a ulitharid and a mind flayer	Deadly	11
46	a drow house captain and 4 drow	Medium	7
47	13 giant octopus	Hard	9
48	14 sea spawn	Hard	9
49-50	7 sea hag	Hard	9
51-53	a mage and 7 apprentice wizards	Medium	7
54-58	a gloom weaver	Medium	7
59	an oni and 3 wererat	Hard	9
60	2 shoosuva	Deadly	11
61-64	a maurezhi and 7 ghouls	Deadly	11
65-66	a flind and 2 gnolls	Medium	7
67-70	5 stone defender	Deadly	11
71	a orc blade of ilneval and 9 orcs	Medium	7
72	3 sword wraith warrior	Easy	5
73	a mouth of Grolantor	Easy	5
74	a leucrotta and 6 gnoll witherling	Easy	5
75-79	a duergar warlord and 10 duergar soulblade	Deadly	11
80-85	3 beholder zombie	Deadly	11
86	2 umber hulk	Medium	7
87	4 mantichore	Medium	7
88	a bandit captain and 15 bandits	Easy	5
89-92	9 quetzalcoatlus	Hard	9
93-94	a hobgoblin devastator and 13 hobgoblins	Hard	9
95-96	2 weretiger	Easy	5
97	an allip and 4 shadows	Easy	5
98-99	5 wights	Hard	9
100	a draegloth and 12 drow	Deadly	11

TREASURES OF THE SHIPS

Each ship will have a small treasure horde, including potions and other miscellaneous treasures. Once the players have finished a particular encounter they may take 2 turns to search the area. Keep in mind that if this pushes them over their limit they risk members of the crew dying.

Roll on the table below to determine the random reward:

RANDOM TREASURE

1d20 Treasure

- 1 2 *potions of supreme healing*, a *potion of growth*
- 2 200 gp, 5 *potions of healing*
- 3 a random silvered weapon (DM's Choice)
- 4 a *potion of cloud giant strength*
- 5 a *potion of gaseous form*, 2 *potions of greater healing*
- 6 a Raison
- 7 1,000 gp, a *potion of flying*
- 8 a random +2 weapon (DM's Choice)
- 9 a *scroll of daylight*, a *potion of waterbreathing*
- 10 a *potion of speed*, a *scroll of fireball*
- 11 5 *potions of supreme healing*
- 12 a *potion of frost giant strength*
- 13 a *scroll of cloudkill*
- 14 300 gp, 6 *potions of healing*
- 15 a *potion of heroism*, a *scroll of animate dead*
- 16 a *scroll of bless*, a *scroll of branding smite*
- 17 a *wand of the war mage*, +2
- 18 a *mace of disruption*
- 19 5 *potions of greater healing*
- 20 a *nine lives stealer greatsword*

THE BOSS ENCOUNTERS

Boats four, seven, and ten are boss encounters which are fixed and not random events. Each of these has specific treasure.

BOAT 1: ZOMBIE PIRATES

As the players board this boat they find themselves face to face with a crew of ten **zombies** led by a **wight pirate captain**. This is the first instance of cannibalism, so there are two speech bubbles to read below. The first ones contains a description of eating humanoid flesh, the second does not.

Read one of the following to the players:

As you hit the deck, you see arrayed before you an entire crew of zombie pirates. You notice some of them chewing on what appears to be human arms and legs. One appears to be chewing on a gnome's head. Leading them is a sight from nightmares: A wight pirate captain.

As you dust yourselves off, ready for another fight, he performs a courtly bow, doffing his captain's hat before sweeping it back onto his head. "Look lively boys," he says to the crew. "Looks like lunch has arrived!"

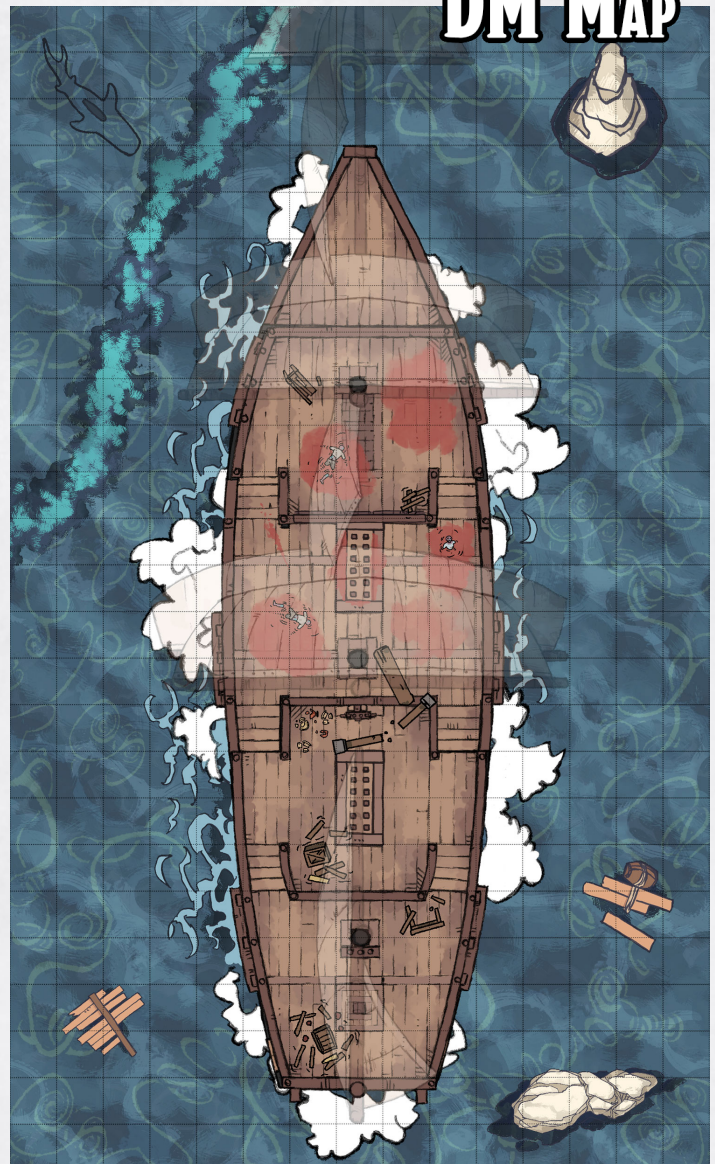
With that he the crew stops what they were doing and attacks!

Or, if you wish to limit the inclusion of cannibalism, read this description to your players:

As you hit the deck, you see arrayed before you an entire crew of zombie pirates. Leading them is a sight from nightmares: a wight pirate captain.

As you dust yourselves off, ready for another fight, he performs a courtly bow, doffing his captain's hat before sweeping it back onto his head. "Look lively boys," he says to the crew and orders them to attack!

DM MAP



THE FIGHT

The wight pirate captain commands 10 zombies who shamble in and attack. Once the enemies are defeated, if the player's look for treasure they will find two items on the wight pirate captain: a +2 longsword and *dread pirate's hat*. To keep the action and suspense flowing, you may allow your players to identify this magic item with either a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check or the *identify* spell and allow them to instantly attune to the item and use its powers immediately.

DREAD PIRATE'S HAT

Wondrous item, legendary (requires attunement).

While wearing this black bicorne hat emblazoned with a skull and crossbones you take on a more fearsome appearance. You appear taller and your face bears illusionary battle scars. You add double your proficiency bonus on Charisma (Intimidation) checks. Additionally, your voice can be clearly heard over greater distance, booming out to over 300 ft. if you wish..

Up to three times per day as an action, you may inspire nearby allies by doffing the dread pirate's hat. Allies within 30 feet who see you doff the hat gain advantage on their next ability check, saving throw, or attack roll made within the next minute.

BOAT 2: THE MERMEN

When the players reach boat seven they find themselves before a deck covered in mermen. Leading them is a vicious creature by the name of Mer'esh the Mer.

When they land on this deck read the following to the players:

Six decks stand behind you and only four ahead now. The journey is starting to take its toll however, but you are resolved to keep moving forward.

While the shore holds an uncertain future, the decks hold death. Before you now stands a small army of merfolk, the biggest of them a scarred and grizzled veteran of many battles. His trident still drips with the blood of some unnamed victim.

You know without being told that there will be no mercy here. He screams something in a language you don't understand and charges forward, his followers close behind.

If any of the players speak Aquan you can also read the following (cannibalism warning):

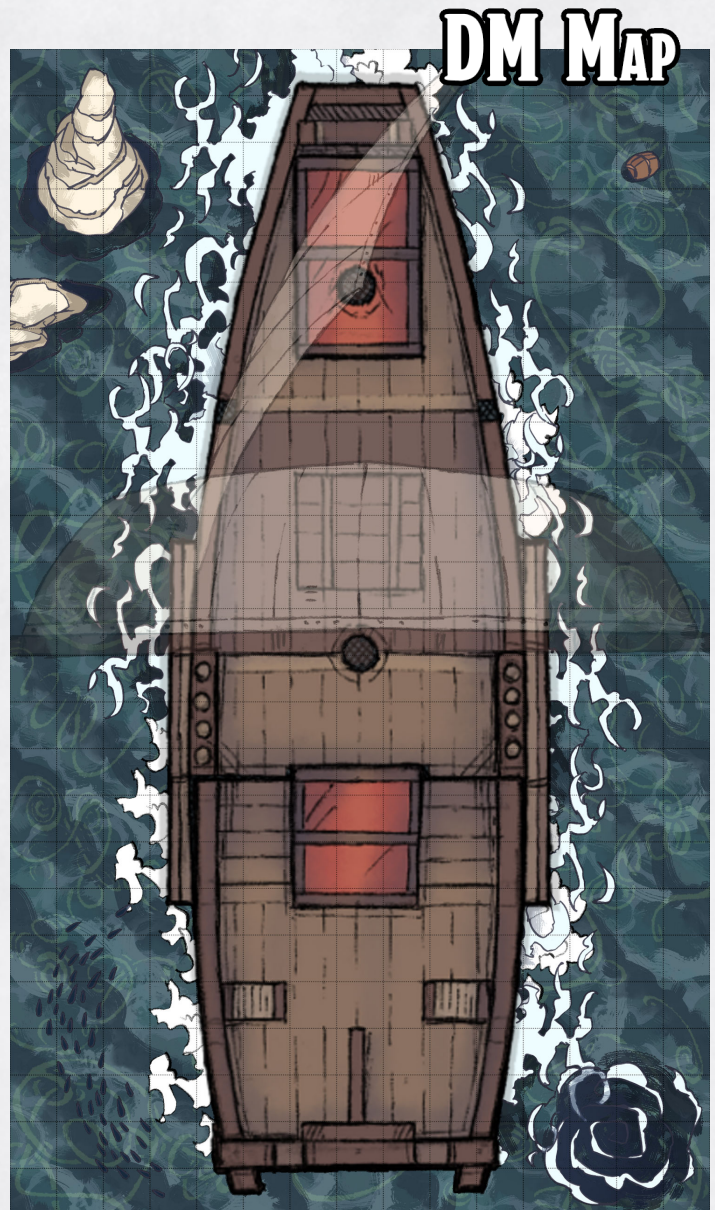
"For the Were! Bring me their heads and devour their flesh. Their deaths make us strong. Kill them now my warriors!"

The mermen consist of **Mer'esh** and fifteen **merfolk**.

Remember there is no timer for this battle, so the crew will not fall here and can be utilized to thin out the herd. If the players are cutting through them too quickly though, consider adding another 5 merfolk, who climb up from the side of the ship during the fight.

Once the fight is finished, the players can search the ship. On Mer'esh they will find the following: 5 *potions of greater healing*, a *potion of hill giant strength*, and Mer'esh's *Makrigga*. To keep the action and suspense flowing, you may allow your players to identify this magic item with either a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check or the *identify* spell and allow them to instantly attune to the item and use its powers immediately.

Once completed the players will have 2 more random encounters before they reach the final boss!



MER'ESH'S MAKRIGGA

Weapon, very rare

While holding this +2 magic trident and speaking a command word, you can use a bonus action to turn the weapon into a shadowy version of itself. For 1 minute, or until you end this effect as a bonus action, it deals psychic damage instead of its usual damage type, and has the finesse and light properties. In addition, when you use the weapon to attack a target that is in dim light or darkness, you make the attack roll with advantage. This property can be activated three times per day.

THE FINAL BATTLE

By now, your players have made their way across 9 ships. They will be weary and beaten. Hopefully most of the crew have survived. This will be their final challenge. When using the mechanics of this fight, make sure to take into account the state of the players. Are they doing well? Are they injured and already near death? Adjust the encounter accordingly and drop some mechanics if they seem like too much.

When they arrive on the final ship, read the following to the players:

You have arrived on the last ship between you and the shore. The deck appears to be empty and it is but a short swim from the ship to the shore.

You sigh with weariness and begin to make your way towards the far rail. As you do so, you see something come leaping out of the water to land on the deck in front of you with a thud. Before you stands a half-shark, half-man monstrosity: a wereshark.

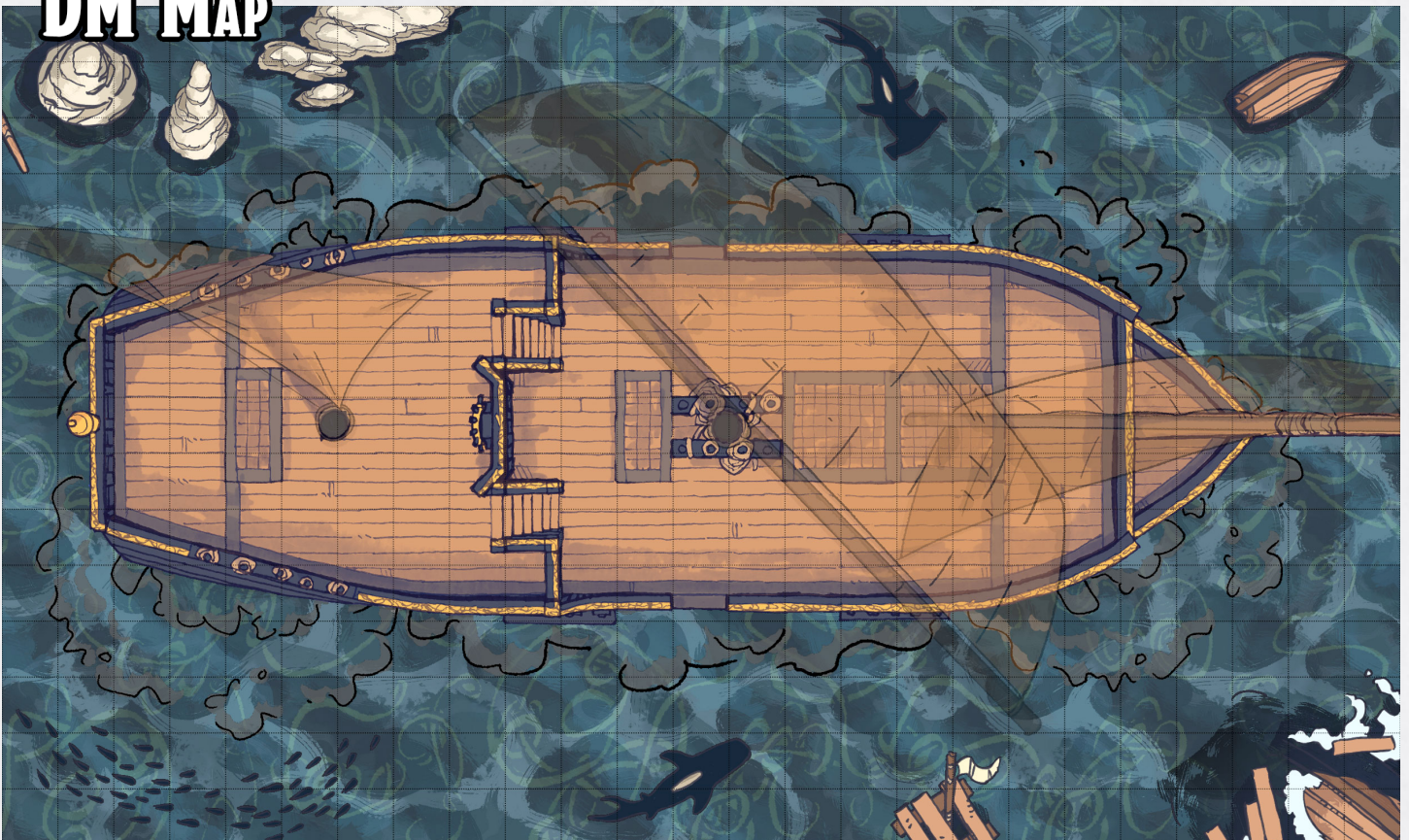
This wereshark appears to be an enormous hammerhead shark-man. It growls low in its throat before saying, "No one leaves this place! You belong to the sea now!"

He points at you all, "You can either turn back and await what the master has in store for you, or you can die here and now." He then settles down to wait for your response.

You know that if you want to get to shore, the only way is through the creature in front of you.

Haravard the wereshark appears to be the only enemy here, but that appearance is deceiving. He will only attack if they move towards the shore. But once he does it is a fight to the death. He stays in Hybrid form for the entire fight, the lack of a moon here means that changing forms is difficult to impossible.

DM Map



HARAVARD ATTACKS

He will use every weapon at his disposal, also trying to bite as many of the players as possible, to infect them with lycanthropy, in the hopes they will stay if they are turned.

If he manages to infect the entire group, read the following to the players:

The Wereshark leaps back out of combat, raising a hand to stop you as he does so. "Know that my name is Haravard, once captain of this very ship. Know that like me you have all been infected. Soon, you will all turn into weresharks, like me. You are part of this domain now. You can try and fight, maybe even win. But the sea is your home now. Join us beneath the waves!"

He stands patiently to await your decision.

If the players decide to stay, the adventure ends there. Skip down to the endings below. If they continue to fight, Haravard says nothing more, he just attacks with everything he has.

LEAPING SHARKS

While it appears Haravard is alone, he is not. At the end of every round of combat have all players, crew and captain roll a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, they take 1d4 bludgeoning damage, as sharks leap from the water and over the boat, whacking anyone too slow to move with their tails.

SHARKNADO

Haravard is no ordinary wereshark, he has the ability to summon a swirling mass of sharks. He can cast this spell once per day and his spell save DC is 14.

SUMMON SHARKNADO

5th-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 30 feet (10-40 foot radius)

Components: S, V, M (A petrified shark fin)

Duration: 1 minute

You summon a swirling vortex of sharks at a target you can see within 30 feet. Roll 2d4 for the number of sharks summoned. For each shark the vortex expands by 5 feet for a minimum of 10 feet and a maximum of 40 feet. Each creature in the radius must make a Dexterity saving throw. For each shark in the vortex, targets take 1d8 bludgeoning damage (for a minimum of 2d8 and a maximum of 8d8) on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

The sharknado moves 20 feet in a random direction each turn, requiring a new save and damage for each new creature affected by this movement. To determine the direction moved, roll a 1d8, on a result of 1, the Sharknado moves straight north, with each successive number being a new direction, moving clockwise. For instance, a result of 4 would move the Sharknado southeast.

If the players are already badly beaten, reduce the duration of the Sharknado to a single round, or use at your own discretion.

HARAVARD'S DEFEAT

Haravard has no intention of dying here. If he is reduced to 20hp, he will break off the fight. With a final word he will leap into the water and disappear beneath the waves. Read the following to the players:

The wereshark leaps backwards grabbing a spar hanging over the railing and perching there briefly.

"Take this hollow victory." he says with a laugh. "I will call back our forces and will let you make the shore. Let you find your safety."

Again he laughs before continuing. "That shore is not safe, just a different kind of danger."

Finally he throws a bag attached to his waist to the ground, "Take these. Consider them my thanks for a worthy fight. I hope you realize the foolishness of your course."

With a final laugh, he drops into the water and vanishes below it's murky green surface.

TREASURE

When the players open the bag they find a week's worth of rations for four, 500 gp and a *scroll of summon sharknado*.

WRAPPING UP THE ADVENTURE

Below are three possible outcomes based on decisions the players made on their adventure, or plans you may have for their future in the Domains of Dread or beyond.

ENDING 1: THE SHORE

Now that the boats have been cleared, the players can make their swim for shore. Don't worry about rolls, the water becomes shallow enough to walk in, within a dozen yards past the last ship.

When they make the shore read the following to the players:

Bone weary, you finally make it to shore. In front of you lies lands unknown, behind you a narrowly avoided death. You sink to the ground for a moment, before getting back up to get a camp sorted and get some rest. You have a feeling, that your trials have only just begun.



If Captain Trenchdigger and at least some of the crew survived read the following to the players:

Captain Trenchdigger walks over to you as you struggle to get to your feet. He gestures for you to sit back down.

"Sit, sit. I think I speak for everyone when I say you saved us from a fate worse than death, aye lads?" he says looking around at the crew, every one of whom nods affirmative. "We will get the fires going and maybe some stew started. I think we are going to need you lot at your best in the coming days."

He turns and begins barking orders at the crew. The crew rush around and get the fires going and a stew on the boil. The fire warms you and it isn't long until you fall asleep. Some time later you awaken to steaming hot stew, as a crew member gently shakes you awake and with a smile and a nod offers you a bowl.

Whether the crew and captain survived, read this to the players last:

A while later, rested, warm and fed, you look out to the mass of ships. You wonder at the wereshark's last words and wonder what you have gotten yourself into. Then you look around at those with you and smile. You just went through the grinder and you are sure that with such stalwart companions by your side, you can defeat any foe, no matter how deadly!

ENDING 2: THE SEA

This ending is an alternate one, where the players decide to take the wereshark's offer and join them, after all, they are all infected with lycanthropy. Read the following to the players:

Harvard's words ring true. You can already feel the infection spreading within you. You know that before too long you will change and the surface will no longer be your home. Harvard stays with you while the change begins. Within two days it is finished. Like him you are now a hybrid. Transforming here is painful and the hybrid form seems to be the easiest to maintain.

Your life now consists of swimming underwater with other creatures and the endless struggle for scant resources with the occasional ship crashing into the mass above. Those are the fun times.

Much of your life is now spent hunting those trying to get to safety and share the spoils of victory against those stupid enough to think there is any escape. It is a life of kill or be killed, a hunt without end!

ENDING 3: THE MISTS

This is an ending that can be used to move the players within the domains of dread or to anywhere else in the universe. Best used if you used this as a side quest during a larger campaign setting.

Read the following:

Bone weary, you finally make it to shore. In front of you lies lands unknown, behind you a narrowly avoided death. You sink to the ground for a moment, before getting back up to get a camp sorted and get some rest.

As you rise to your feet you notice a mist beginning to rise. Before you can move it has encircled every survivor. You can no longer see anyone around you. It is almost smothering in its intensity. You wave your hands around, seeing if you can feel anything and yell out to your companions. You hear their answering cries, but you cannot pinpoint their locations.

Then as suddenly as it appeared the mist is gone. You look around to see that the landscape has changed. Somehow you have been transported somewhere else!



THE DEPTHS OF MADNESS

AN ADVENTURE FOR FOUR TO SIX CHARACTERS OF 1ST TO 4TH LEVEL

Written by B.J. "professorbeej" Keeton



SRI RAJI

Sri Raji is a domain that could be a paradise if it were located anywhere else. Its verdant jungles and ornate architecture should be breathtaking. Instead, each step outside of a settlement is treacherous, travelers and traders often hunted by native wildlife (or worse).

The dark lord of Sri Raji, the Maharaja Arijani, demands a daily sacrifice to appease the dark god he serves. This, unsurprisingly, blankets Sri Raji with a pervasive, unescapable, and hopeless fear.

INTRODUCTION

The jungles of Sri Raji teem with wildlife as well as monstrous creatures, looking for their next meal. In addition to the daily sacrifices demanded by the Maharaja, people and traders from other domains coming into Sri Raji are going missing.

Trade routes once considered safe (by Sri Raji standards) are causing an already frightened people to panic. Cities and villages are beginning to run out of food and supplies as traders from other domains and regions within Sri Raji refuse to travel. The domain is on the verge of chaos.

And through it all, the Maharaja Arijani remains silent.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

This adventure takes place in Sri Raji, a jungle-filled domain of dread. This domain sits apart from the norm for most demiplanes of dread in that the sun shines often, the people who live there attempt to live somewhat complete lives, and visitors from other domains are welcomed as trade partners, if not friends.

The Maharaja Arijani is reclusive, but demanding. Rumors have begun to circulate that the Maharaja looks to increase the number of daily sacrifices to Mother Night in order to gain her assistance in making the trade routes safe.

Each of the daily sacrifices travel via albino elephant from their home village to Mahakala, the Maharaja's temple-palace in Bahru, the Accursed City. Clerics and priests of Mother Night escort the sacrificial procession; however, the most recent sacrifices have disappeared on the road, along with Arijani's most trusted clergy.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Below are two different ways you can hook the characters into heading into the deep jungles of Sri Raji.

THE FOREST PATH

The most common entrance to Sri Raji is through the misty ways of Ravenloft. For a party of adventurers in a forest or wooded area, it is incredibly easy to be taken in by the mistways.

As the characters advance along a normal course, the ground gradually becomes covered in fog. At first, the fog appears to be normal for the area, but as they continue, it grows thicker and obscures their vision and path more. Until it eventually overtakes them. When it dissipates, they stand within the jungle of Sri Raji.

The party can see shadows and shapes through the foliage ahead, while bestial roars and shouts of pain and terror rise and fall. Then, from the direction of the screams, a hulking, humanoid weretiger walks out of the jungle toward them, covered in blood.

ESCORT FOR HIRE

If the party is already traveling in the domains of dread, the mistways are open to them. They are approached by a traveling band of traders whose livelihoods rely on making this supply run. They tell the party about the recent issues in Sri Raji and offer a percentage of their profits if they make it to their destination safely.

Once in Sri Raji with the traders and on the roads, they are ambushed by a party of 8 large tigers and a hulking humanoid weretiger. In an instant, all of the traders are mauled and their corpses dragged into the jungle, leaving the weretiger glaring and growling at the adventuring party.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This adventure will have the party mostly exploring in the jungles of Sri Raji, seeking out those responsible for the danger along the roadways.

Along the way, they will be hunted by jungle predators (and perhaps the jungle itself), explore the ruins of a lost temple, and search for answers.

CONTENT WARNING

This adventure contains wild animals that are killed, as well as coming across the corpses of various animals.

The idea of insanity and madness are touched on in this adventure, using different states of *Madness* as described in the *Dungeon Master's Handbook*.



THE DEPTHS OF MADNESS

Either of the adventure hooks for this domain will have the party facing off against a **weretiger** immediately. If the party is able to take on and defeat the weretiger themselves, they may. If not, a group of Rajians led by Tracker Panth (female human **scout**) emerges from the jungle to assist them. Should the party take care of the weretiger on their own, Panth and her group come out afterward.

TIGER SEASON

Tracker Panth introduces herself to the group, letting them know she has been tracking that particular weretiger through the night. She thanks them for their help in taking it down and tells them about the disappearances along the road.

Various minor dignitaries and merchants have offered a reward for anyone who can bring an end to the disappearances, so Panth put together a group to work toward that. Read the following to the players:

Panth gestures to the weretiger's corpse and two of her followers move to it immediately. "Take the pelt and be careful with the head."

She looks back to you, as though expecting dissent. "We aren't going to have a problem here, are we?" You can see her lick her teeth under her lips. Her hand rests on the pommel of her sword.

One of the merchants looking to clear the trade routes is rich trader from the city of Pakat named Vaden Spicer, male human **commoner**. He has put a bounty on tigers in the region outside Pakat, including weretigers, because he believes it's a simple territory issue causing the disappearances and will pay to have the roads "safe" again for travel. Spicer believes more disappearances have happened outside of Pakat than anywhere and that his bounty will allow him to take credit when the disappearances stop.

If the party wants more information, a successful DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check convinces Panth to add that she doesn't think the tigers are responsible. She thinks there's something darker out there in the jungle, but knows of a few streaks of weretigers in the area, and they can make a lot of money picking individuals off as they leave the group to hunt. And if they do happen to be what's responsible, then maybe they'll get in Spicer's good graces and get work as permanent escorts.

SOMETHING DARKER

As the conversation with Panth begins to wrap up, translucent tentacles begin to emerge from the jungle behind Panth. Have the adventurers make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw. Anyone who succeeds is able to react in time to avoid the ethereal, purple tendrils snaking out of the forest. Anyone who fails is Restrained and takes 1d4 psychic damage. Read the following to the players:

As you react to the sudden attack, you see Tracker Panth and her group succumb to the tendrils. Screams echo around you as the ghostly whips grab their arms and legs and are just as quickly cut off as they wrap around their necks.

The wispy tentacles drag them quickly into the depths of the Sri Raji jungle where the screams and sounds of struggle quickly die off. As likely did Panth and her companions.

Any characters snared by the tendrils must successfully make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or take 1d4 psychic damage each round until successful. When they succeed or fall unconscious, the tentacle slithers back into the jungle.

As the party recovers from the attack and sudden abduction of Panth's party, an adventurer making a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check may realize that these eldritch tentacles are likely what has been yanking people from the roads never to be heard from again.

Whenever the party decides to move forward, whether that is to find a settlement or the merchant Vaden Spicer that Panth had mentioned or anything else, they will notice the jungle around them has shifted without their noticing, and they're now deep inside the undergrowth. Read the following to the players:

You are surrounded on all sides by verdant wilderness. The nearby road is nowhere to be seen, nor is there any sign of Panth and her party. You hear rustling in the bush around you, leaves and plants quake and quiver as wildlife darts quickly around.

Growls in the distance seem to grow closer, and you hear a single high-pitched scream from an indiscernible direction. It sounds more human than animal. More anguish than rage.

Even the light seems to have shifted now, the golden light tinted green through the jungle canopy now feels dimmer and has a bluish tint. Small wisps of mist swirl at the base of trees and underbrush.

The jungle around you feels alive in a way that it shouldn't. Not that it is filled with life, plants and animals. No, that the jungle itself is alive. And more than that ... it feels hungry.

HERE, THERE, AND BACK AGAIN

From this point forward in the adventure, time will flow and seem different to the adventurers. Their journey through the jungle of Sri Raji should be a bit less linear than most dungeons and a lot more harrowing.

The dark powers that hold sway over domains of dread thrive off of fear, and the jungles of Sri Raji can provide the perfect location to harvest that.

The party is now trapped in the jungle. Roll 1d4 to determine in which section of the jungle the party is currently located.

Each location on the map is labeled 1-4, and each time the adventurers move to a new area in the jungle, the DM will roll 1d4 to determine which of the areas they to travel to.

ELDRITCH PATHWAYS

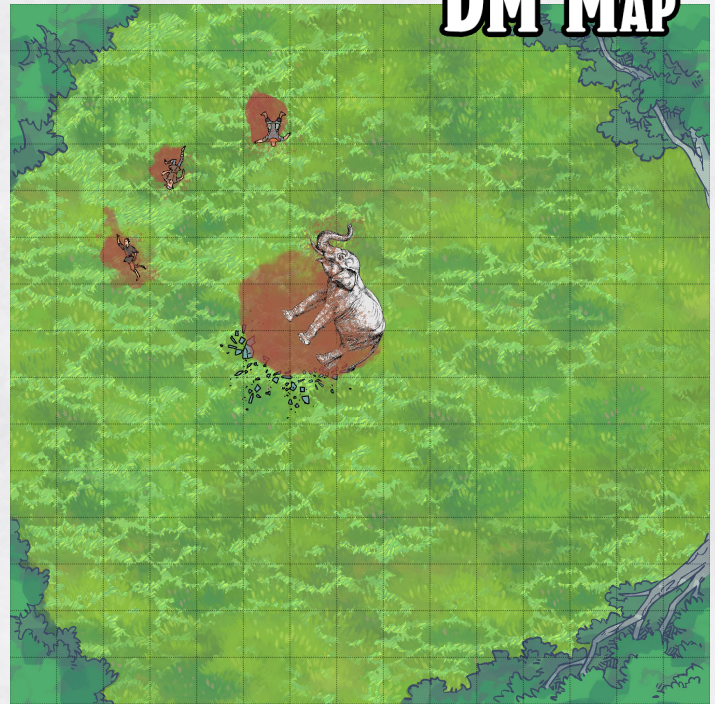
Each time the adventurers choose to move deeper into the jungle, the tentacles lash out as they did earlier and block the way. The different pathways the adventurers may follow to travel in the jungle are controlled by an unseen presence attempting to confuse them and obfuscate their path through the jungle.

The party cannot move backward once the tentacles encircled them, as they are being surrounded on all sides by eldritch horror. The following happens each time the adventurers travel outside of one of the four zones designated on the map:

- Each party member will make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. If successful, they avoid the grasping tendrils, if they fail, they are Restrained and take 1d4 psychic damage each turn until successfully making a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw. The tendril then releases them and disappears back into the jungle.
- Any party member who touches a tendril in any way must successfully make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw, or be afflicted with *Madness*.
- If no member of the party is touched by a single tendril in a pathway, each member of the party has advantage on their saving throws the next time they pass through one.
- Each time the party encounters the tendrils, and they have all disappeared, roll 1d4. The party exits the eldritch pathway into the corresponding area on the map, even if it is the area they just exited.
- When the party has visited each zone at least once, the next pathway they travel to will lead directly into Zone 5. This is the only way to end the loop.

NOTE TO DMs

From this point forward, *Madness* plays a role in the adventure in different ways. It is up to you as to whether your party is afflicted with short-term, long-term, or indefinite madness as described on page 258 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.



1: THE ALBINO ELEPHANT

In this area of the jungle, the eldritch pathway gives way into a wide, circular clearing. The ground is soft and muddy, and the shadows can be seen moving through the jungle at a distance.

The striking part of this area isn't the area itself. It's the huge albino elephant lying on its side.

If the party approaches the elephant and it is daylight, they are attacked by two **tigers** and a **weretiger**.

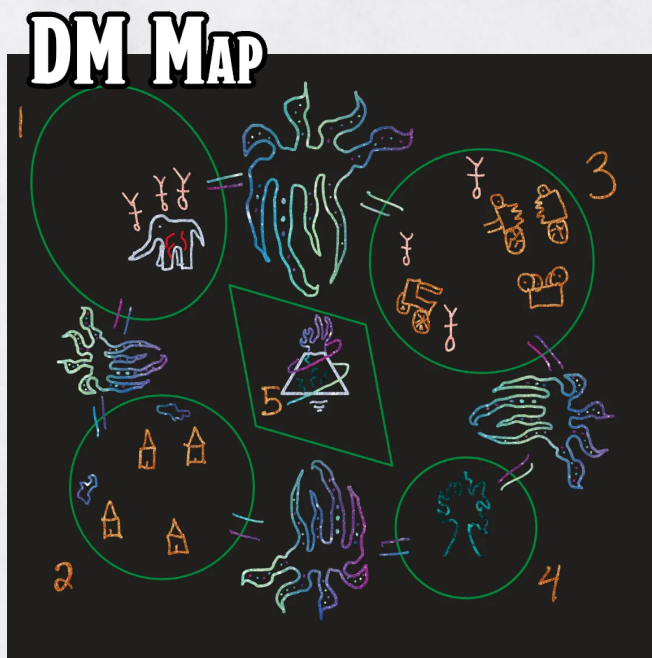
The animal is obviously dead, and as the party walks closer, it becomes apparent why: large wounds on its legs, head, and body look as though bites have been taken out of it by something with huge jaws.

On the far side of the elephant are three humanoid bodies, two in brightly colored robes and one in what was once a pure white robe and hood. Blood now mars their clothing and pools all around them. Their wounds match the elephant's.

If the party investigates further, they will see that the elephant has been barded, too, and its howdah has been broken into pieces that are strewn around the site. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check will allow a player to find a scroll with the name Iali Baram on it, writing in Rajian that indicates Iali was to be a sacrifice to Mother Night, and at the bottom of the scroll is an illustration of a white elephant kneeling in front of a humanoid tiger on a throne.

2: ABANDONED VILLAGE

Upon entering this thicket, the party will notice the absence of underbrush that is present in the rest of the jungle. The ground is relatively clear and flat, hardly any vines or downed logs clutter the area. There are, however, occasionally patches of leaves and fronds in piles carpeting the ground.

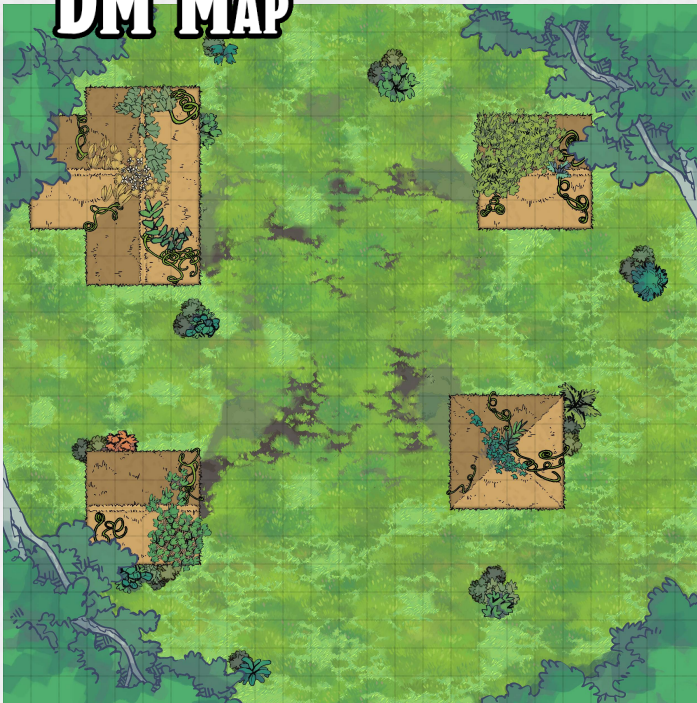


In the center of the abandoned village is a Pit Trap that is covered in fronds and leaves which blend in with the ground cover. A character making a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check can see the trap for what it is. Any character who steps on the trap must make a successful DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, or plunge into the pit. The pit is 15 feet deep and lined with sharpened sticks, aimed upward. A character falling onto them will take 1d6 piercing damage plus 1d6 bludgeoning damage.

Most of the structures are empty if anyone goes into them. Any furniture left inside has rotted away because of the humidity, or it breaks when touched. Metal instruments and objects such as cups or tools are rusted away. A player who makes a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check inside any of the village structures can find a herbalism kit and cartographer's tools in decent-enough condition to function.

A **gibbering moulder** patrols the outer perimeter of the village. The number of gibbering moulder increases by 1 for every party member afflicted with *Madness* when the party enters the area.

DM Map



3: WAGONS AND CARTS EVERYWHERE

Smashed carts, overturned chests, and decaying corpses are everywhere in this area. Wagons are overturned, their contents spilling onto the ground. Fabric and textiles of all shades and textures are ruined and torn. Blood seems to have soaked into everything. Multiple albino elephants appear to have been dismembered and are similarly scattered in pieces.

The bodies that lay scattered around the area are hard to identify, but the scraps of clothing along with the goods strewn about would indicate they are the missing merchants and traders who never reached their destinations, as well as the sacrifices and their escorts.

Every 10 minutes the party spends in this area, 1d6 **cursed tigers** and 1d4 **cursed weretigers** emerge from the jungle as a group. An ethereal aura surrounds them, almost like smoke encircling them. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check or a character with a Passive Perception of 13 can see the aura is made up of smaller versions of the eldritch tentacles that plague the party.

CURSED NPCs

The *cursed* versions of tigers and weretigers use the stat blocks in the Monster Manual, but with the following additional ability:

Psychic Curse. When any of these creatures are reduced to 0 hit points, everyone within 5 feet must make a successful DC 11 Constitution saving throw or take 1d6 psychic damage.

A party member who successfully makes a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check finds two intact chests. The chests are made of white stone inlaid with gold. The tops are engraved with the same picture of a humanoid tiger on a throne, and the sides each depict an elephant surrounded by robed figures and being ridden by someone wreathed in light.

Inside each of the chests is a *Sacrificial Keris of Sri Raji*, a long dagger with a wavy, white stone blade. Intricate gold inlay decorates the blade from cross-guard to tip, and the pommel is adorned with a deep crimson gemstone.

DM Map



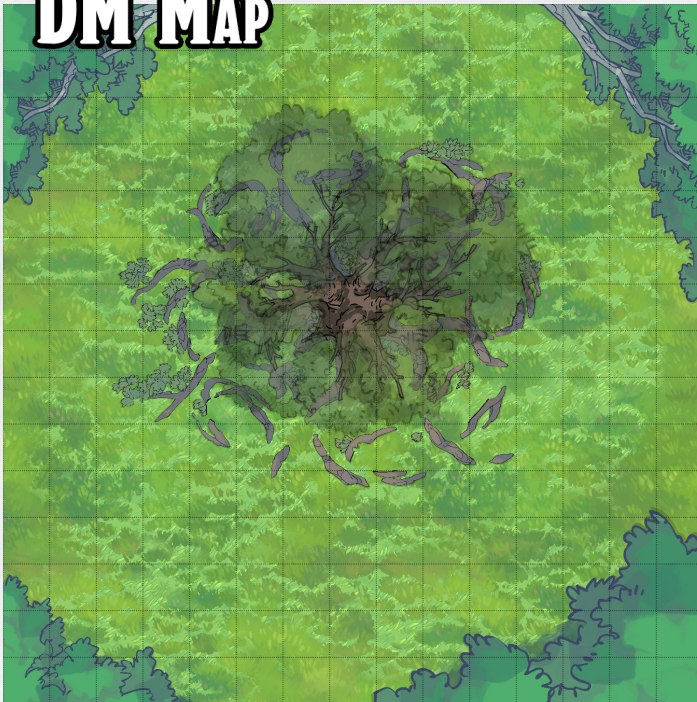
SACRIFICIAL KERIS OF SRI RAJI

Weapon (dagger or shortsword), rare (requires attunement)

A weapon with a curved, white blade between the sizes of a dagger and shortsword, the keris can deal either piercing or slashing damage, but the damage type must be determined by the attacker at the time of attack. The keris may be wielded by anyone who can use either simple or martial weapons. They may count as either a dagger or shortsword for spells and abilities that target one specific type of weapon, but not as both for the same effect.

When you hit with the keris, the target takes an additional 1d8 necrotic damage, and the attacker gains that amount of temporary hit points.

DM Map



4: TREE OF WEIRDING

In this area, the air is thick, and the party sees everything as though through heatwaves. In the center of the jungle clearing sits a ruined circle of paved stone and a tree rising from its center, wrapped in vines.

From a distance, the vines around the tree appear to dance and shift because of the wavy distortion in the air. The tree itself seems as though it is shifting, too. It spirals upward in one direction, while the vines appear to shift downward. But neither changes location nor shape. The tree and vines just writhe and twist in place.

Any creature that moves within 5 ft. of the tree must successfully make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be afflicted with *Madness*.

Any character who fails their saving throw will also see 1d4 **eldritch shadows** materialize around the tree. Only those afflicted with some form of *Madness* can see them, however, anyone may physically interact with them.

Should the party attempt to short or long rest in this area, they will all be afflicted with *Madness* at the end of their rest and 2d6 **eldritch shadows** materialize in the middle of the party. This particular instance of *Madness* may not be resisted.

5. JUNGLE TEMPLE RUINS

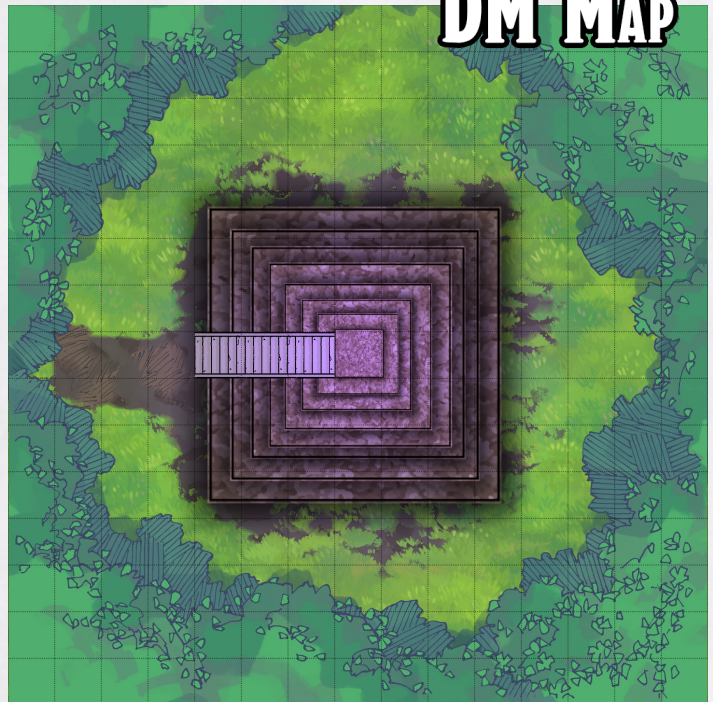
When the party exits one of the previous areas and they have visited all four of them, the party will find themselves in a new area of the jungle.

Before them is a pyramid rising from the ground, a ramp encircling it from base to peak. The top of the pyramid is still contained within the canopy. The jungle growth has overtaken much of it, cracking stones and breaking away parts of the ramp and walls. Piles of rubble litter the ground around it with cracks that split the structure from top to bottom.

The heat of the jungle is missing here. Instead, cold emanates from the pyramid, a deep cold that touches the party's bones, more than their skin.

At the very top, a purple-black glow emanates and illuminates the underside of the jungle canopy. A thick mist rolls around the party's feet and the base of the pyramid. Dozens of thick, writhing eldritch tentacles drape from the top of the pyramid.

DM Map



Whenever any creature gets within 5 feet of the pyramid, a gigantic tendril of black-purple energy whips from the top platform, striking at the creature. They must successfully make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute as well as become afflicted with *Madness*.

These tendrils continually attack any and all creatures every few seconds. They ignore creatures already inflicted with *Madness*.

At the end of the ramp at the zenith of the pyramid, two **cursed tigers** and three **cursed weretigers** block entry to the platform. After they are dealt with, read the following to the players:

As your attention turns to the center of the platform, you see a form that has to be the Maharaja Arijani. He resembles a weretiger, only easily twice as large. He is dressed in extravagant clothing and holds a large scimitar with a white blade in each hand.

In front of him is the obvious source of the eldritch tentacles in the jungle, an amorphous, pulsing monstrosity oozing out of the cracks in the pyramid's roof.

As you watch, the tentacles that have been writhing across the pyramid begin to contract. They slither inward before quickly wrapping around Arijani, who roars briefly before a tentacle works its way down his throat, stifling the sound.

The tendrils continue to encase him and you watch as they lift the large weretiger from the pyramid roof. The tentacles pulse and writhe faster, dark energy flowing from the entity's center until they are thrown apart by a burst of energy.

And before you stand the nearly unrecognizable form of the Maharaja Arijani floating just above the ground. His fur is now tinted purple, large tendrils emerge from his back and whip frantically around him, and his twin scimitars glow with a smoke-like aura.

Most strikingly, the tiger's face is now a mangled, twisted parody of itself. His eyes are solid black, and his lower jaw has been replaced by translucent purple tentacles.

BATTLING THE CORRUPTION

Arijani, while hardly a friendly presence in Sri Raji normally, has been further corrupted and taken over by the eldritch presence within the shattered pyramid. Behind him, the amorphous blob oozes further out of the cracks, following beneath where the **corrupted maharaja** floats. As the maharaja moves, the entity's presence remains there, covering the roof.

Any creature that touches it must successfully make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened until the end of their next turn.

Arijani cannot be reasoned with in this state, but will only attack the party when they move within 10 feet of him. When the **corrupted maharaja** is reduced to 0 hit points, read the following to the players:

The Maharaja's body goes limp, falling to the ground in a heap. The dark energy that had taken it over seeps out of the large tiger and rejoins the larger entity. His fur loses the purple tint, and he lays on the stone, barely breathing but alive.

You can feel the eldritch horror's attention turn to you as it engorges and rises above you, formless but somehow solid. The psychic tendrils whip around you and solidify, sealing together and blocking any way off from the top of the pyramid.

A void opens in the entity's mass, gaping and endless. Anger emanates from it, though it makes no sound. From the void, an army of shadows rush toward you.

As the party engages the swarm of four **eldritch shadows** come at them and two **eldritch tentacles** emerge from the ground around them. The **formless entity** shifts in shape as two of its stalks grow from it. They begin firing bursts of energy at the party.

After this encounter, read the following to the players:

With a shriek that somehow pierces directly into your mind, the formless mass begins to shrink around you. It withdraws into the cracks of the pyramid, flowing inward just as smoothly as it had oozed forth.

The Maharaja begins to stir, sitting up and growling with a low rumble. As the last of the eldritch entity disappears into the depths of the jungle temple, the sweltering Sri Raji heat slams into you.

The bone-chilling cold has been replaced by overwhelming humidity, and it takes a few moments to catch your breath from the sudden change in atmosphere.

The Maharaja Arijani stands up, flexes, and reaches for his swords. He stalks toward you, and as he draws closer, you can see just how imposing a figure the dark lord truly is.

His voice is a low rumble, gravely from the back of his throat. He says, "It has been many years since I was in anyone's debt." He breathes in deeply, and you can hear a deep growl start in his chest. "But that is not to say I am ungrateful."

With a sneer, he holds one of his swords toward you, pommel first.



WRAPPING UP THE ADVENTURE

The Maharaja Arijani offers the party *Mindthrasher*, and tells them that no one can know what happened here. He will send word across the domain that he has defeated a great evil and that the roads are clear and safe once again for travel and trade. He emphasizes how dire the consequences are for those who contradict the Maharaja himself.

MINDTHRASHER

Weapon (scimitar), very rare (requires attunement)

An item gifted to the Maharaja Arijani by the dark lord of Falkovia, Mindthrasher's white stone blade was originally etched with golden tree branches from cross-guard to tip. However, after Arijani's encounter with the eldritch power at the jungle pyramid, the etching resembles tentacles more than tree branches.

When you hit with Mindthrasher, the target takes an additional 1d8 psychic damage or once per combat encounter, you may choose for the target to succeed make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 turn.

He tells the party that they are free to roam the domain, and they have *The Maharaja's Blessing* in thanks. Should the party press their luck with him and want more, he will unfasten a pouch from his belt, drop it at their feet, and stalk away without saying a word.

Inside the pouch are a fire opal (1,000 gp), two white pearls (100 gp each), and a handful of miscellaneous gemstones worth 250 gp collectively.

THE MAHARAJA'S BLESSING

Wondrous item, very rare

An invisible aura prevents you from being chosen as a ritual sacrifice while in Sri Raji, and grants you the ability to roll with advantage on one single attack, ability check, or saving throw you make while in Sri Raji.

This ability may be used after you roll the die but before the outcome is determined. The Maharaja's Blessing may be used once per day and resets after taking a long rest.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

The party can choose to stay in Sri Raji at this point, exploring and seeing what other trouble they can get into or riches they could claim, such as Vaden Spicer's tiger bounty.

With the roads as safe as they ever were in Sri Raji, the party may also find traveling around the domain to their liking, as well as being able to traverse the mist ways into other domains of dread.

Additionally, if the party was brought to Sri Raji by the mists, that phenomenon is everywhere in the domains of dread, and it would not be out of the ordinary for the party to be overtaken by them and returned to whatever realm they hail from. Or to be taken to somewhere new and different altogether.



APPENDIX A: NPCs

The following chart shows where in the Official Wizards of the Coast 5th Edition *Dungeons & Dragons* books you can find these NPCs. Any NPCs not found in these books are new NPCs created for this book's adventures and will be found on the pages that follow this chart.

NPC Name	Stat Block Location	Page #
air elemental	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 124
allip	<i>Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes</i>	pg. 116
apprentice wizard	<i>Volo's Guide to Monsters</i>	pg. 209
assassin vine	<i>Tomb of Annihilation</i>	pg. 213
bandit	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 343
bandit captain	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 344
behir	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 25
beholder zombie	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 316
black pudding	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 241
camel	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 320
canoloth	<i>Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes</i>	pg. 247
cat	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 320
cave bear	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 334
cloaker	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 41
commoner	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 345
corpse flower	<i>Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes</i>	pg. 127
cyclops	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 45
draegloth	<i>Volo's Guide to Monsters</i>	pg. 141
drow	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 128
drow house captain	<i>Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes</i>	pg. 184
drow mage	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 129
druid	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 346
duergar soulblade	<i>Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes</i>	pg. 190
duergar warlord	<i>Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes</i>	pg. 192
dust mephit	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 215
earth elemental	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 124
elder brain	<i>Volo's Guide to Monsters</i>	pg. 173
eternal flame priest	<i>Princes of the Apocalypse</i>	pg. 200
fire elemental	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 125
flameskull	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 134
flesh golem	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 169
flind	<i>Volo's Guide to Monsters</i>	pg. 153

NPC Name	Stat Block Location	Page #
ghast	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 148
ghoul	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 148
giant octopus	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 326
giant scorpion	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 327
giant vulture	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 329
gibbering moulder	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 157
gladiator	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 346
gloom weaver	<i>Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes</i>	pg. 224
gnoll	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 163
gnoll fang of Yeenoghu	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 163
gnoll hunter	<i>Volo's Guide to Monsters</i>	pg. 154
gnoll pack lord	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 163
gnoll witherling	<i>Volo's Guide to Monsters</i>	pg. 155
gray slaad	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 277
grick	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 173
grick alpha	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 173
gynophinx	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 282
hobgoblin	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 186
hobgoblin devastator	<i>Volo's Guide to Monsters</i>	pg. 161
hook horror	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 189
hyena	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 331
intellect devourer	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 191
kobold	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 195
leucrotta	<i>Volo's Guide to Monsters</i>	pg. 169
mage	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 347
manticore	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 213
maurezhi	<i>Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes</i>	pg. 133
merfolk	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 218
mimic	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 220
mind flayer	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 222
mind flayer arcanist	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 222
mouth of Grolantor	<i>Volo's Guide to Monsters</i>	pg. 149
mummy lord	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 229
noble	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 348
nothic	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 236
ogre zombie	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 316
oni	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 239
orc	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 246
orc blade of Ilneval	<i>Volo's Guide to Monsters</i>	pg. 183

NPC Name	Stat Block Location	Page #
otyugh	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 248
phase spider	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 334
phoenix	<i>Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes</i>	pg. 199
priest	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 348
quetzalcoatlus	<i>Volo's Guide to Monsters</i>	pg. 140
revenant	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 259
roper	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 261
sahuagin	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 263
sahuagin priestess	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 264
scorpion	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 337
scout	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 349
sea hag	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 179
sea spawn	<i>Volo's Guide to Monsters</i>	pg. 189
shadow	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 269
shambling mound	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 270
shoosuva	<i>Volo's Guide to Monsters</i>	pg. 137
skeleton	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 272
spy	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 349
stone defender	<i>Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes</i>	pg. 126
stone giant	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 156
stone giant dreamwalker	<i>Volo's Guide to Monsters</i>	pg. 150
sword wraith warrior	<i>Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes</i>	pg. 241
the lost	<i>Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes</i>	pg. 233
thug	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 350
tiger	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 339
tlincalli	<i>Volo's Guide to Monsters</i>	pg. 193
tomb guardian	<i>Tomb of Annihilation</i>	pg. 127
turtle druid	<i>Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes</i>	pg. 242
treant	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 289
troll	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 291
ulitharid	<i>Volo's Guide to Monsters</i>	pg. 175
umber hulk	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 292
vampire spawn	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 298
vampiric mist	<i>Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes</i>	pg. 246
vine blight	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 32
wererat	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 209
weretiger	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 210

NPC Name	Stat Block Location	Page #
wight	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 300
wood woad	<i>Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes</i>	pg. 198
wraith	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 302
young red dragon	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 98
yuan-ti nightmare speaker	<i>Volo's Guide to Monsters</i>	pg. 205
yuan-ti pureblood	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 310
zombie	<i>Monster Manual</i>	pg. 316

ANGELINA

PRECISION FLESH GOLEM

Medium construct, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 90 (10d8+45)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Damage Immunities lightning, poison; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands and speaks the language of the creator

Challenge 4 (700 XP)

Aversion of Fire. If the golem takes fire damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

Immutable Form. The golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. The golem has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The golem's weapon attacks are magical.

Actions

Multiattack. The golem makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

CAPTAIN WILFRED TRENCHDIGGER

Medium humanoid (dwarf), chaotic good

Armor Class 15 (heavy leather coat)
Hit Points 71 (11d8 + 22)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Strength +4, Dexterity +5, Charisma +4

Skills Athletics +4, Acrobatics +5, Intimidation +4, Perception +4, Persuasion +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Captain's Orders (1/Day). As a bonus action, the captain can choose a friendly creature who can see or hear it to attack an enemy. The creature can immediately use its reaction to make one weapon attack.

Sea Legs. The captain has advantage on ability checks and saving throws to resist being knocked prone.

Actions

Multiattack. The captain makes three attacks.

Cutlass. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) slashing damage or *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) slashing damage.

Heavy Pistol. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage.

CHERI

Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil

Armor Class 16
Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 20)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	20 (+5)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Skills persuasion +6

Condition Immunities charmed

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages common, Akiri

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Psi Knife. Cheri can manifest psionic power as shimmering blades of psychic energy. These magic blades are simple melee weapons with the finesse and thrown properties. Each has a normal range of 60 feet and no maximum range. On a hit, they deal psychic damage equal to 4d6 + her Dexterity modifier.

Psionic Clairvoyance. Once per encounter, whenever Cheri makes attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, she may roll an additional d12 after the die is rolled, but before the outcome is determined. She may add the result of the new roll to her original roll.

Psychic Teleportation. As a bonus action once per encounter, Cheri can manifest one of her Psychic Blades and throw the blade at an unoccupied space she can see up 30 feet away. She then teleports to that space, and the blade vanishes.

Actions

Multiattack. Cheri makes three melee attacks: two with her psi knives and one ranged if a target is available.

Psi Knife. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (4d6 + 5) piercing damage or *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (4d6 + 5) piercing damage.



CLOCKWORK GUARD

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 15
Hit Points 72 (14d8+9)
Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	4 (-3)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Saving Throws Str +6, Con +3
Damage Immunities poison, psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 10
Languages understands the language of the creator
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Immutable Form. The clockwork guard is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. The clockwork guard has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Actions

Multiattack. The clockwork guard makes two melee attacks.

Halberd. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage.

CLOCKWORK HOUND

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 15
Hit Points 33 (6d8+6)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	4 (-3)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 10
Languages understands the language of the creator
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Immutable Form. The clockwork hound is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. The clockwork hound has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.



CORRUPTED MAHARAJA

Medium monstrosity, evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 100 (16d8 + 48)

Speed 45 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	3 (-4)

Damage Immunities psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, poisoned

Senses blindsight 20 ft., darkvision 60ft.

Challenge 4 (750 xp)

Pounce. If the Maharaja moves at least 15 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a tentacle slam attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be grappled by the Maharaja's tentacle aura. If the target is grappled, the Maharaja can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

Actions

Multiattack. The Maharaja makes two scimitar attacks.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Tentacle Slam. *Melee Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (3d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be grappled.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become afflicted with *Madness*.

CRUSADER

Medium humanoid (goliath), any lawful

Armor Class 21 (plate + shield + defensive fighting style)

Hit Points 71 (7d10 + 28)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +7

Skills Athletics +6, Insight +4, Intimidation +4, Persuasion +4

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Giant, Elvish, Dwarvish

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Martial Role: Attacker. The crusader gains a +2 bonus to all attack rolls (included below).

Stone's Endurance. When the crusader takes damage, it can use its reaction to roll a d12. Add the sidekick's Constitution modifier to the number rolled, and reduce the damage by that total.

Lay on Hands (35 points). The crusader has a pool of healing power that replenishes when it takes a long rest. With that pool, the crusader can restore a total number of hit points equal to its level x5. As an action, it can touch a creature and draw power from the pool to restore a number of hit points to that creature, up to the maximum amount remaining in its pool.

Divine Smite. When the crusader hits a creature with a melee weapon attack, it can expend one spell slot to deal radiant damage to the target, in addition to the weapon's damage. The extra damage is 2d8 for a 1st-level spell slot, plus 1d8 for each spell level higher than 1st, to a maximum of 5d8. The damage increases by 1d8 if the target is an undead or a fiend to a maximum of 6d8.

Spellcasting. The crusader is a 7th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). The crusader has the following spells prepared:

1st level (4 slots): *bless*, *cure wounds*, *wrathful smite*

2nd level (1 slots): *magic weapon*

Actions

Multiattack. The crusader makes two longsword attacks.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.



DEMON ZOMBIE

Medium undead (demon), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	4 (-3)	8 (-1)	6 (-2)

Saving Throws Wis +2

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages understands Abyssal but can't speak

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

Rotting Presence. When any creature that isn't a demon or undead starts its turn within 30 feet of one or more of the demon zombies, that creature must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 1d6 necrotic damage plus 1 necrotic damage for each demon zombie within 30 feet of it.

Standing Leap. The demon zombie's long jump is up to 20 feet and its high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

DESERT BARBARIAN

Medium humanoid (human), any chaotic

Armor Class 16 (breastplate)

Hit Points 59 (6d12 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	9 (-2)

Saving Throws Con +5

Skills Athletics +7, Perception +4, Survival +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common and Orcish

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Rage (3/Day). In battle, the barbarian fights with primal ferocity. On its turn, the barbarian can enter a rage as a bonus action. While raging, it gains the following benefits if it isn't wearing heavy armor:

- Advantage on Strength checks and saving throws.
- When it makes a melee weapon attack using Strength, it gains a +2 bonus to the damage roll.
- It has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage.

The barbarian's rage lasts for 1 minute. It ends early if it is knocked unconscious or if its turn ends and it hasn't attacked a hostile creature since its last turn or taken damage since then. The barbarian can also end its rage on its turn as a bonus action.

Marital Role: Attacker. The barbarian gains a +2 bonus to all attack rolls (included below).

Reckless Attack. When the barbarian makes the first attack on its turn, it can decide to attack recklessly. Doing so gives it advantage on melee weapon attack rolls using Strength during this turn, but attack rolls against the barbarian have advantage until its next turn.

Storm Aura. The barbarian emanates a stormy, magical aura while it rages. The aura extends 10 feet from it in every direction, but not through total cover. All other creatures in this aura take 2 fire damage each.

Actions

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d12 + 4) slashing damage.

Wristblade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.



DESERT ZOMBIE

Medium undead, evil

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 45 (6d8 + 20)
Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	2 (-5)	6 (-2)	7 (-2)

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 30ft.
Languages understands languages known in life, but can't speak
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Dust Bomb. When the desert zombie is slain, it immediately explodes into a cloud of dust and sand. All creatures within 5 ft. must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be blinded for 1 round.

Born of the Sand. Once per encounter, as a bonus action, the desert zombie may submerge into the ground it stands on and claw its way to any unoccupied space within 20 feet. Using this ability does not provoke attacks of opportunity. The ground must be made of sand or be soft enough to tunnel through to use this ability.

Actions

Multiattack. The desert zombie makes two claw attacks. For each of these attacks that reduces a creature to 0 hit points, the desert zombie can make an additional claw attack.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (5d6 + 5) slashing damage.

ELDRITCH SHADOW

Small aberration, evil

Armor Class 8
Hit Points 6 (1d6 + 1)
Speed 45 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)	6 (-2)	2 (-4)

Damage Immunities psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, poisoned
Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft.
Challenge 1/4 (50xp)

Pack Tactics. The shadow has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of its allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Amorphous. The shadow can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Actions

Vitality Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) necrotic damage, and the target's Constitution score is reduced by 1d4. The target dies if this reduces its Constitution to 0. Otherwise, the reduction lasts until the target finishes a short or long rest.

If a non-evil humanoid dies from this attack, a new shadow rises from the corpse 1d4 hours later.



ELDRITCH TENTACLE

Large aberration, evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 45 (8d12 + 8)

Speed 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	3 (-4)

Damage Immunities psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, poisoned

Senses blindsight 20 ft., darkvision 60ft.

Challenge 2 (750 xp)

Actions

Tentacle Slam. *Melee Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be grappled.

Terrifying Presence. Any beast or humanoid that starts their turn within 5 feet of the tentacle must succeed at a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to an eldritch tentacle's presence for the next 1 hour.

ELDRITCH WARRIOR

Medium humanoid (human), any lawful

Armor Class 15 (breastplate)

Hit Points 60 (7d10 + 14)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Saving Throws Con +4

Skills Athletics +7, Insight +3, Perception +3, Survival +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Elvish, Gnomish

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Two-Weapon Fighting Style. When the eldritch warrior engages in two-weapon fighting, it can add its ability modifier to the damage of the second attack (included below).

Martial Role: Attacker. The eldritch warrior gains a +2 bonus to all attack rolls (included below).

Second Wind. The eldritch warrior gains a limited well of stamina that it can draw on to protect itself from harm. On its turn, it can use a bonus action to regain 17 hit points. Once the eldritch warrior uses this feature, it must finish a short or long rest before it can use it again.

Spellcasting. The eldritch warrior is a 7th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The eldritch warrior has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *green-flame blade*, *mold earth*, *toll of the dead*

1st level (3 slots): *absorb elements*, *sleep*, *thunderwave*

2nd level (1 slot): *magic weapon*

Weapon Bond. The eldritch warrior cannot be disarmed and can summon its weapons if not within reach with a bonus action.

Actions

Multiattack. The eldritch warrior makes two scimitar attacks and one dagger attack with its bonus action as an off-hand attack.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.



FERAL CENTAUR

Large monstrosity, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 33 (6d10)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +3, Survival +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Centaur

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Charge. If the centaur moves at least 30 ft. straight toward a target and then hits it with a pike attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 10 (3d6) piercing damage.

Actions

Pike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* (1d10 + 4) piercing damage.

Hooves. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

FORMLESS ENTITY

Huge aberration, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 90 (45 each stalk)

Speed 0 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	7 (-2)

Damage Immunities all

Condition Immunities charmed, poisoned, prone, grappled

Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 300 ft.

Languages understands all languages, telepathy 1,000 ft.

Challenge 4 (750 xp)

Formless. The entity possesses no true shape, growing its amorphous mass however best suits its needs. The huge mass of its main body dodges or absorbs all attacks, making it immune to all damage. However the stalks are immune to only psychic damage.

Actions

Multiattack. The formless entity will always attack with both of its stalk beams at Initiative 20, targeting one or two creatures it can see within 90 feet of it. Each beam may only be used once per turn.

Charm Stalk. The target must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw, becoming charmed for 1 hour or until reduced below 50% of current hp.

Pain Stalk. The target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 11 (2d10) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

HARAVARD THE WERESHARK

Large humanoid (human, shapechanger), neutral evil

Armor Class 14, 15 in shark or hybrid form (natural armour)

Hit Points 120 (16d8 + 48)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft. (0 ft., swim 60 ft. in shark form)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Skills Perception +2

Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (shark form only), passive Perception 12

Languages Common (can't speak in shark form)

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Shapechanger. The wereshark can use its action to polymorph into a shark-humanoid hybrid or into a hunter shark, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its size and AC, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Amphibious The wereshark can breathe air and water.

Blood Frenzy (Shark or Hybrid Form Only). The wereshark has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

Summon Sharknado (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only) (1/Day). The wereshark can summon a sharknado (see sharknado spell).

Actions

Multiattack (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). The wereshark makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite.

Bite (Shark or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with wereshark lycanthropy.

Trident (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage, or 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage when used in two hands to make a melee attack. Or *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

ISMARK

Medium humanoid, lawful good

Armor Class 17

Hit Points 58

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (0)	11 (0)	10 (0)

Skills Perception +2, Athletics +5

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. Ismark makes two longsword attacks. If he has a shortsword drawn, he can also make a shortsword attack.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d10 + 1) piercing damage



MER'ESH THE MER

Medium humanoid (merfolk), neutral evil

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 93 (17d8 + 17)

Speed 10 ft., swim 40 ft..

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Aquan, Common

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

Amphibious. Mer'esh can breathe air and water.

Actions

Trident (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, or 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage when used in two hands to make a melee attack. Or *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

NA'IL

Medium humanoid, lawful evil

Armor Class 17

Hit Points 175 (10d12 + 75)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+4)	16 (+3)

Skills intimidation +6

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses passive perception 14

Languages Common, Akiri

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Akiri Fury. As a bonus action, Na'il can make one weapon attack, which deals an extra 9 (2d8) necrotic damage on a hit. If the attack succeeds, Na'il has advantage on attack rolls against the target until the end of his next turn.

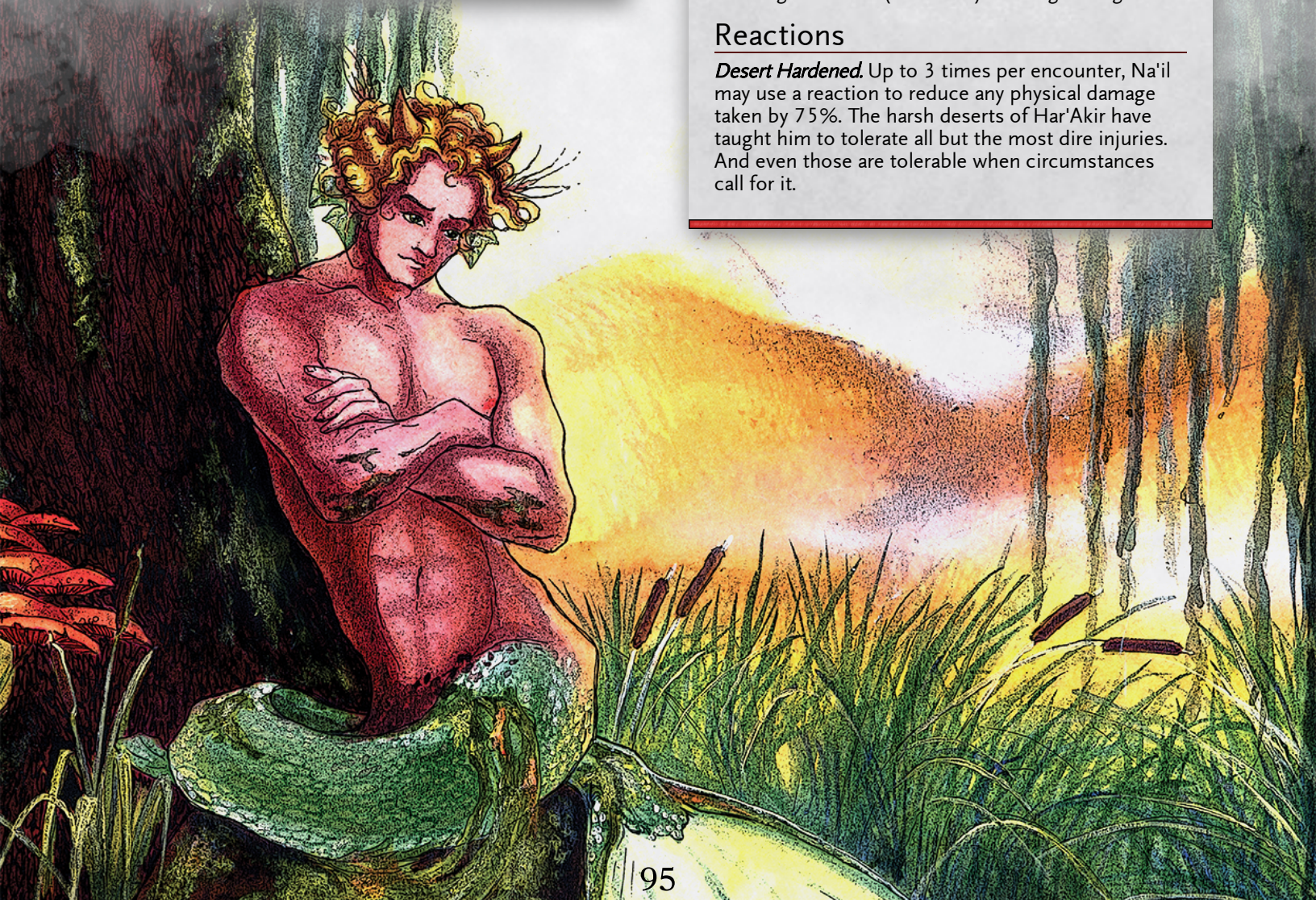
Actions

Multiattack. Na'il makes three scimitar attacks.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 35 (10d6 + 5) slashing damage.

Reactions

Desert Hardened. Up to 3 times per encounter, Na'il may use a reaction to reduce any physical damage taken by 75%. The harsh deserts of Har'Akir have taught him to tolerate all but the most dire injuries. And even those are tolerable when circumstances call for it.



N'ZAL THE BREATHLESS

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 17
Hit Points 175 (10d12 + 75)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	16 (+4)	20 (+5)

Skills Arcana +5, Intimidation +7
Condition Immunities poisoned, charmed
Damage Resistances fire, cold, necrotic
Damage Vulnerabilities radiant
Senses blindsight 10ft., darkvision 120ft.
Languages Common, Akiri
Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

***Pact Spellcasting.** (N'zal is a 17th level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17). N'zal may cast the following spells, requiring no material components, at the highest spell-level possible (6th). N'zal has 5 pact slots to expend, granted by Ankhtepot himself.

Cantrips: *eldritch blast*, *firebolt*, *chill touch*

1st level: *mage armor*, *charm person*, *chromatic orb*, *burning hands*, *armor of Agathys*

2nd level: *scorching ray*, *invisibility*

3rd level: *fireball*, *vampiric touch*, *hypnotic pattern*, *counterspell*

4th level: *wall of fire*, *banishment*, *fire shield*

5th level: *hold monster*, *flame strike*

6th level: *eyebite*, *circle of death*, *mass suggestion*

Ankhtepot's Favor. Once per encounter, N'zal may make a melee attack roll against a creature within range, causing them to succeed at a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or be inflicted with *Madness* for 1d10 minutes. Roll for short-term madness effect on the chart on page 258 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Reactions

Blast from the Past (3/day). As a reaction, when a creature within 30 feet of N'zal makes an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, N'zal may cause the space around them to shift two seconds into the past, disorienting and causing them to make that roll with disadvantage.

SKELETAL DEFENDER

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (armor scraps)
Hit Points 50 (5d10 + 15)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)	6 (-2)

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages understands all languages it spoke in life but can't speak
Challenge 2 (400 XP)

Magic Weapons. The skeletal defender's attacks are magical.

Actions

Multiattack. The skeletal defender makes two claw attacks.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage plus 4 (1d8) necrotic damage.



THE CREW

Medium humanoid, chaotic good

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 15

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Special Attack. For each surviving crew member you do 1d6 damage for melee attacks, to a max of 15d6, or 1d8 per ranged attack for a maximum of 15d8.

Actions

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6) slashing damage per crew member.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80 ft./320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8) piercing damage per crew member.

VAMPIRE HUNTER

Medium humanoid (half-elf), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 49 (7d8 + 7)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Int +4

Skills Acrobatics +4, Investigation +4, Religion +4, Stealth +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Evasion. When the vampire hunter is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, it instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Fey Ancestry. The vampire hunter has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put the drow to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. The vampire hunter's spellcasting ability is Charisma. It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *minor illusion*, *true strike*

3/Day each: *hunter's mark*, *protection from evil and good*

1/Day each: *darkness*

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). The vampire hunter deals an extra 10 (3d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the vampire hunter that isn't incapacitated and the vampire hunter doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Whip Mastery. If the vampire hunter hits with a whip attack against a creature of Large size or smaller, the attack deals its normal weapon damage and the target is knocked prone.

Actions

Whip. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) slashing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it is knocked prone.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.



WEREPANTHER

Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 49 (9d8 + 9)

Speed 30 ft. (50 ft., climb 40 ft. in hybrid or panther form)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +8

Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Common, plus up to one other language (can't speak in panther form)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Shapechanger. The werepanther can use its action to polymorph into a panther-humanoid hybrid, or into a panther, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Keen Smell. The werepanther has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Pounce (Hybrid or Panther Form Only). If the werepanther moves at least 15 feet straight toward a creature, and then hits it with a claws attack, the target must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw, or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the werepanther can make a bite attack against it as a bonus action.

Actions

Multiattack (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). The werepanther makes two attacks with its shortwords or with its claws.

Bite (Hybrid or Panther Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, or be cursed with werepanther lycanthropy.

Claws (Hybrid or Panther Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) slashing damage.

Shortwords (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

WIGHT PIRATE CAPTAIN

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 67

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14(+2)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4, Athletics +5, Intimidation +4

Damage Resistance necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't silvered

Damage Immunity poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 5 (1800xp)

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the wight has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Flourish. The wight adds its Charisma modifier to the damage roll for its longsword attacks (included in the attack)

Sea Legs. The wight has advantage on ability checks and saving throws to resist being knocked prone.

Actions

Multiattack. The wight makes two longsword attacks or two longbow attacks. It can use its Life Drain in place of one longsword attack.

Life Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0. A humanoid slain by this attack rises 24 hours later as a zombie under the wight's control, unless the humanoid is restored to life or its body is destroyed. The wight can have no more than twelve zombies under its control at one time.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage, or 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Reactions

Shape Up, Ye Dog (2/Day). Whenever a friendly creature within 30 feet of the wight that can hear it misses with an attack, the wight can yell perilous threats to allow that creature to reroll the attack roll.

ZOMBIE HORSE

Large undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 30 (4d8 + 12)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	8 (-1)	6 (-2)

Saving Throws Wis +1

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages none

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie horse to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie horse drops to 1 hit point instead.

Trampling Charge. If the zombie horse moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a hooves attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the zombie horse can make another attack with its hooves against it as a bonus action.

Actions

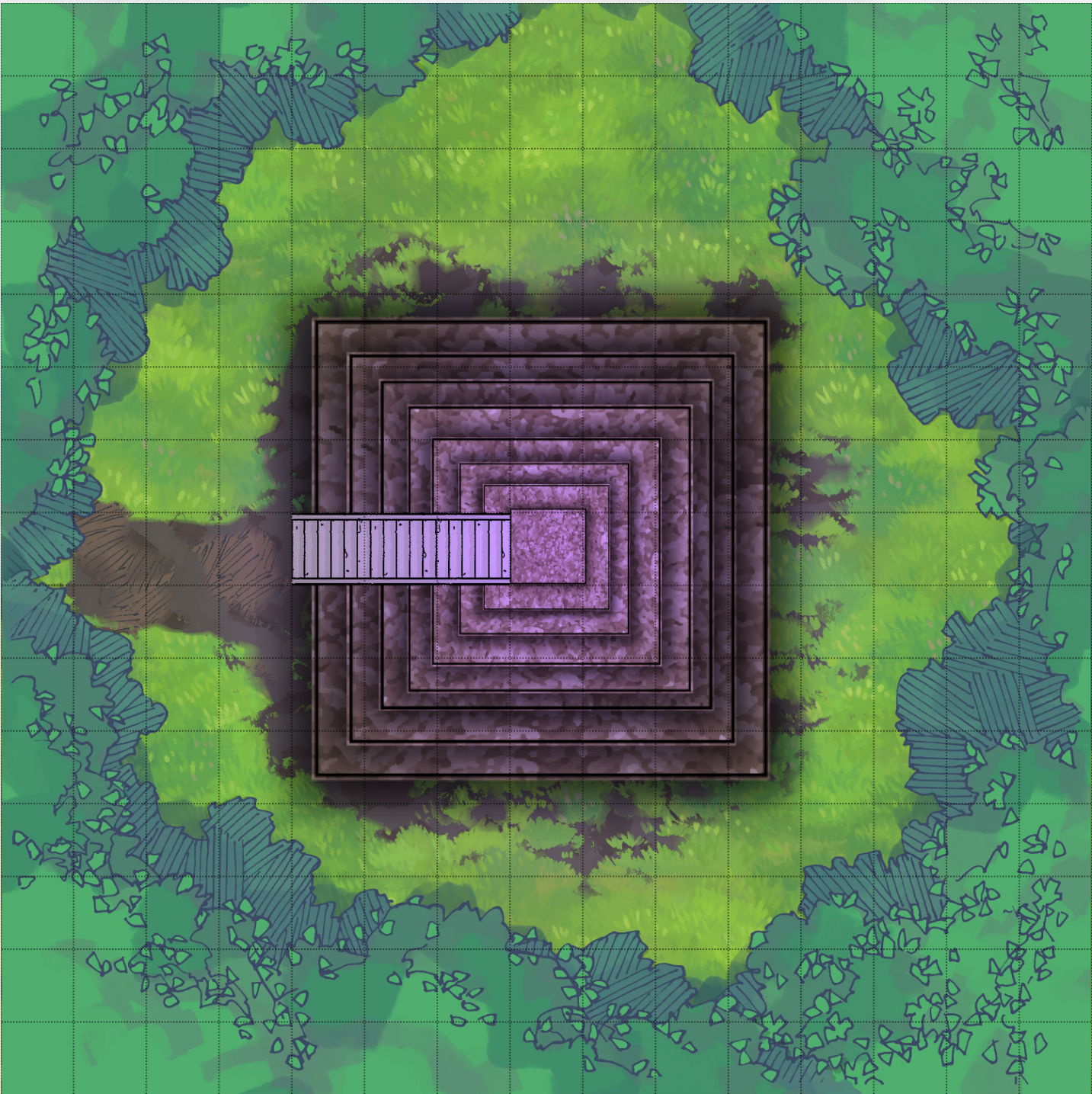
Hooves. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.



APPENDIX B: MAPS

RIGHT TURN

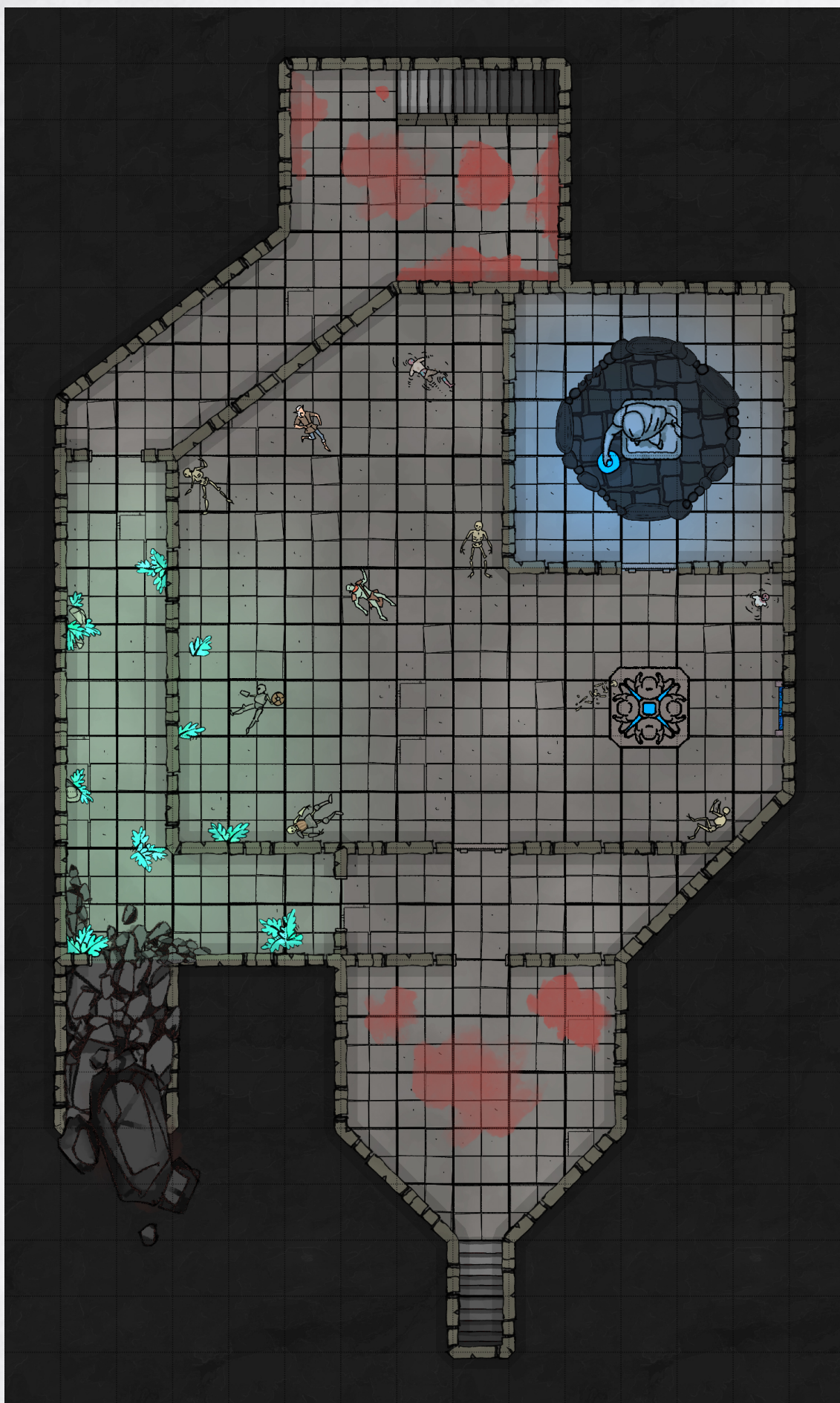




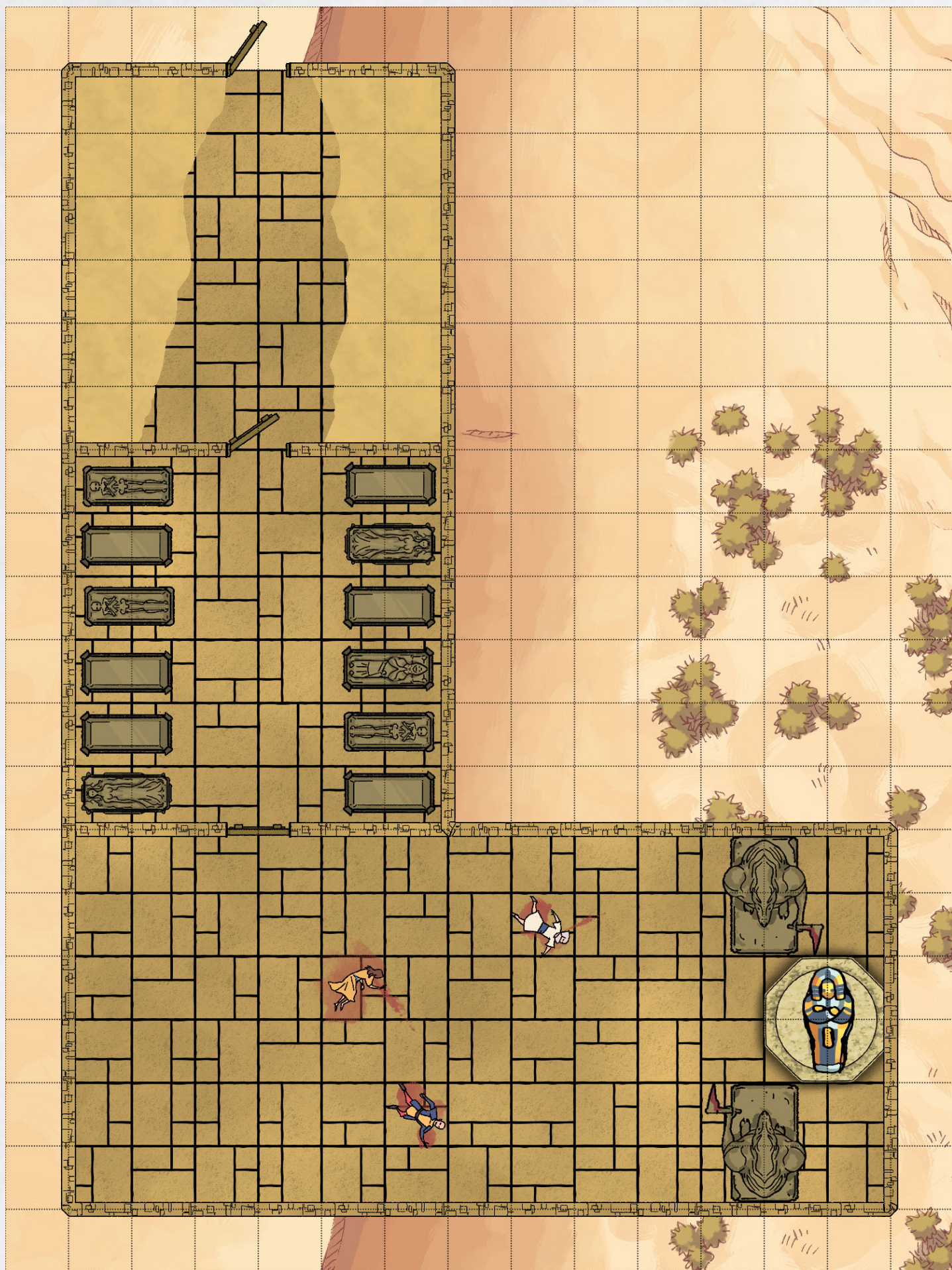


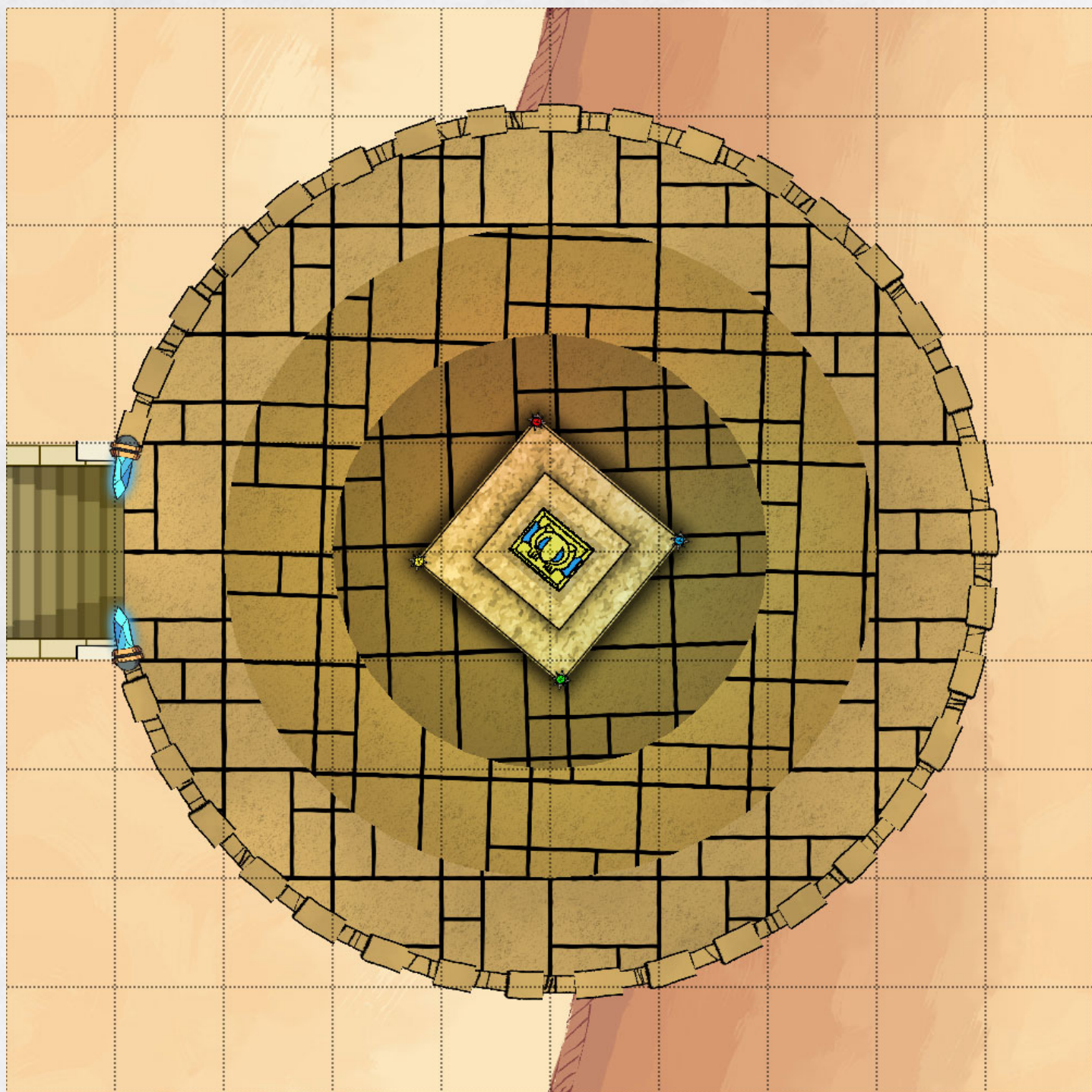
THE ORB OF BALOK--BALOK OUTDOORS



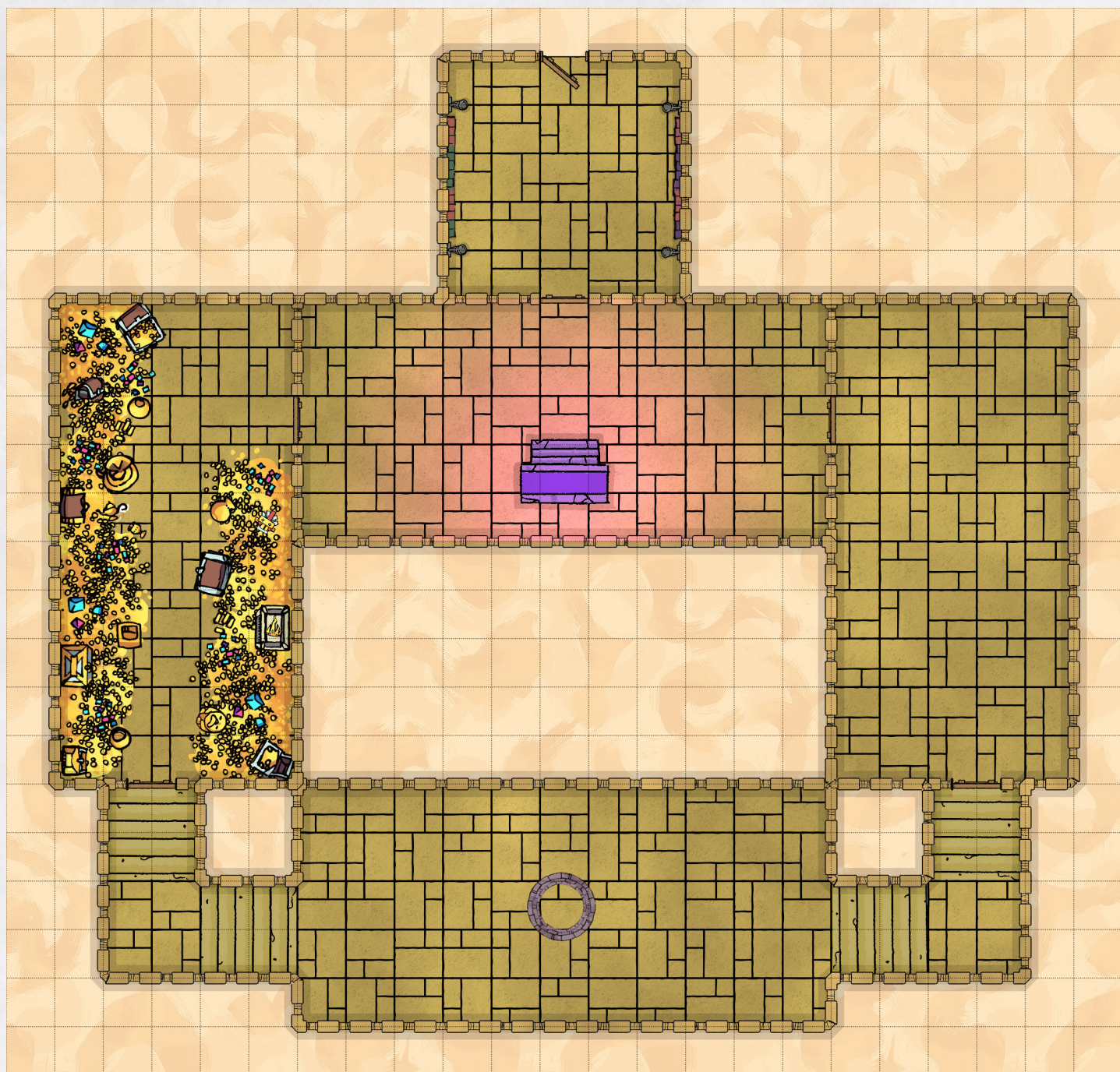


THE DESERTS OF HAR'AKIR--THE TOMB OF VENISH THE LESSER

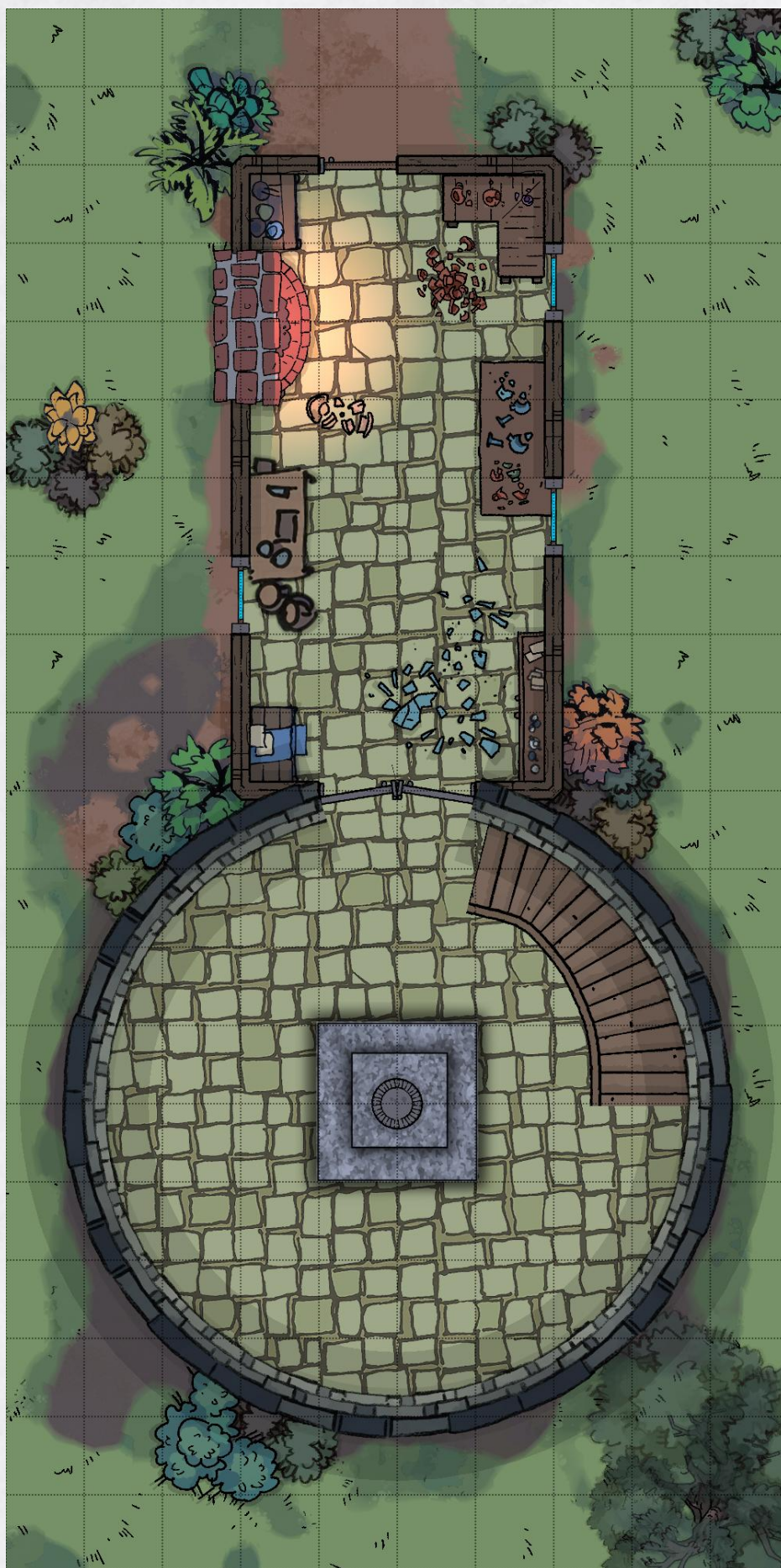


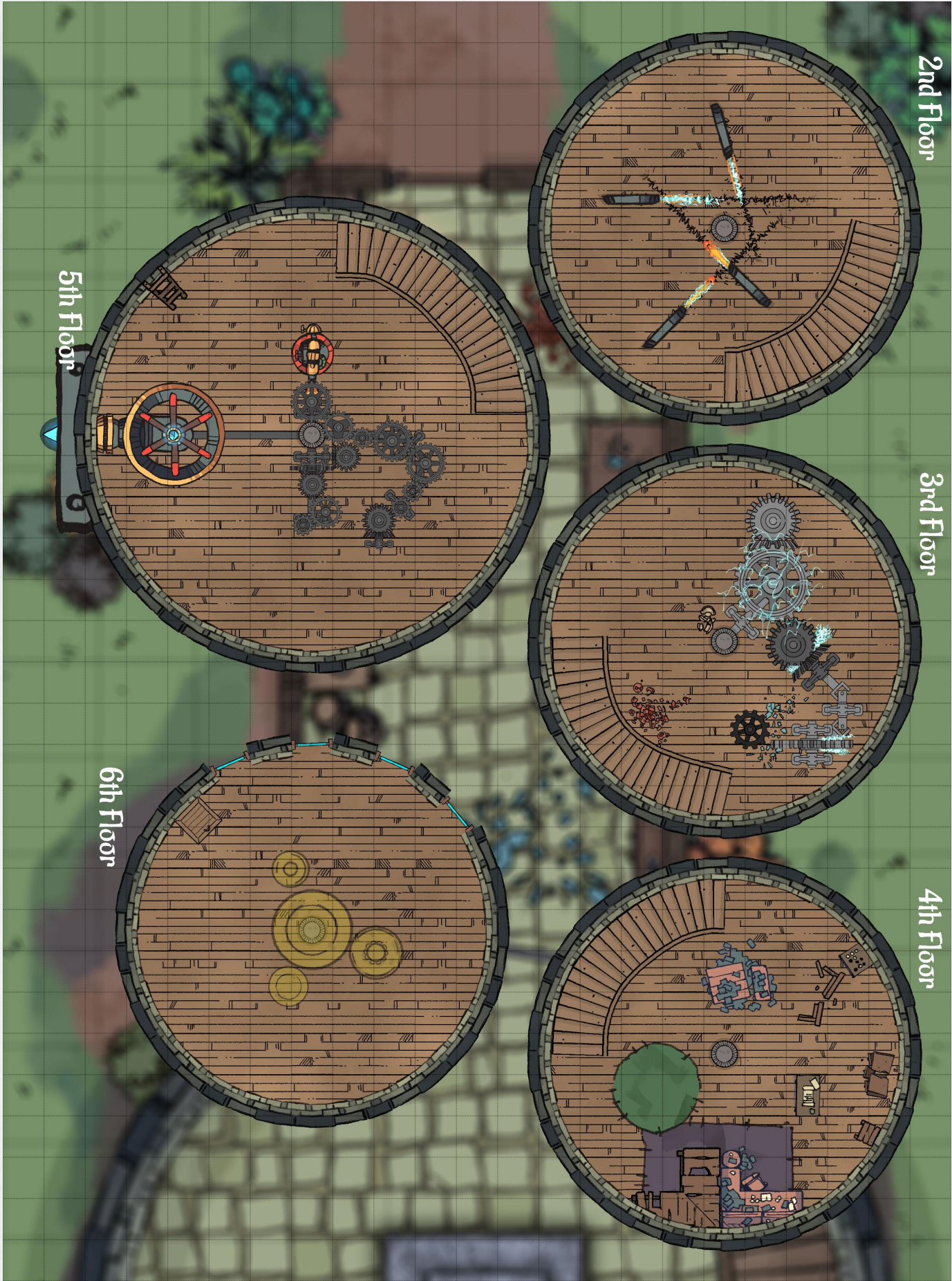


THE DESERTS OF HAR'AKIR--THE TOMB OF N'ZAL THE BREATHLESS

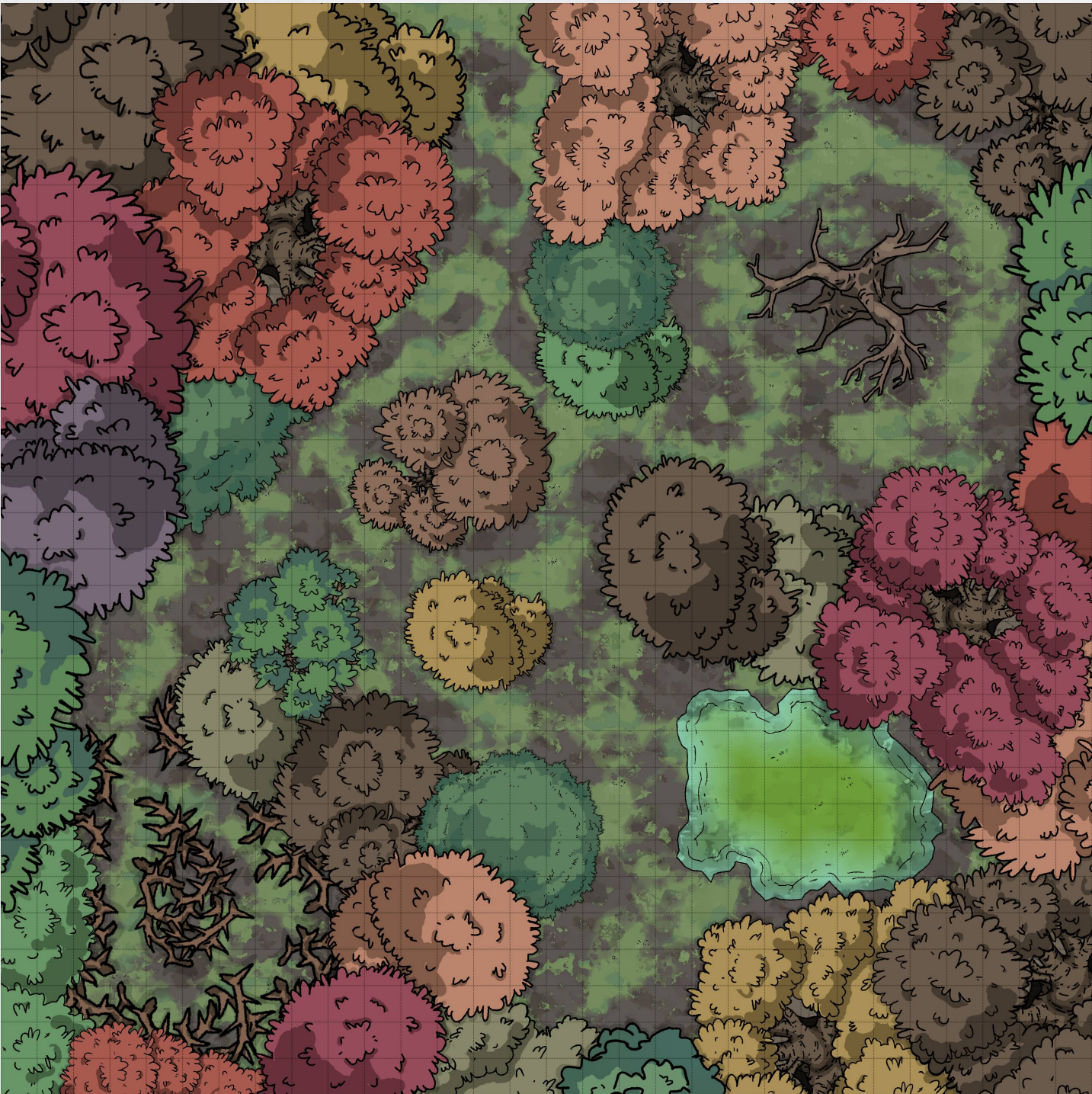


THE TIMEKEEPER'S TOWER--WORKSHOP TOWER 1

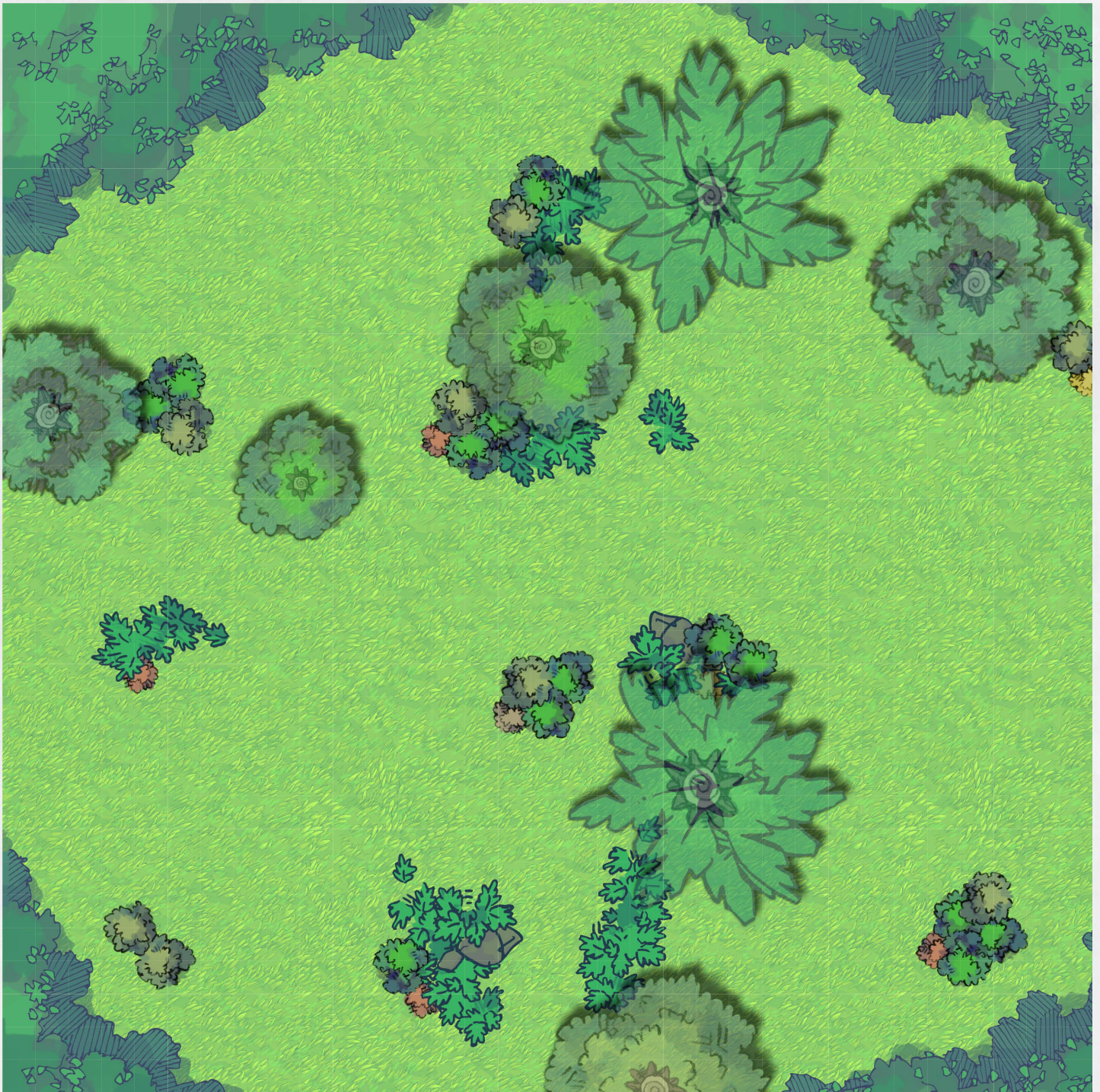




SACRED GROVE



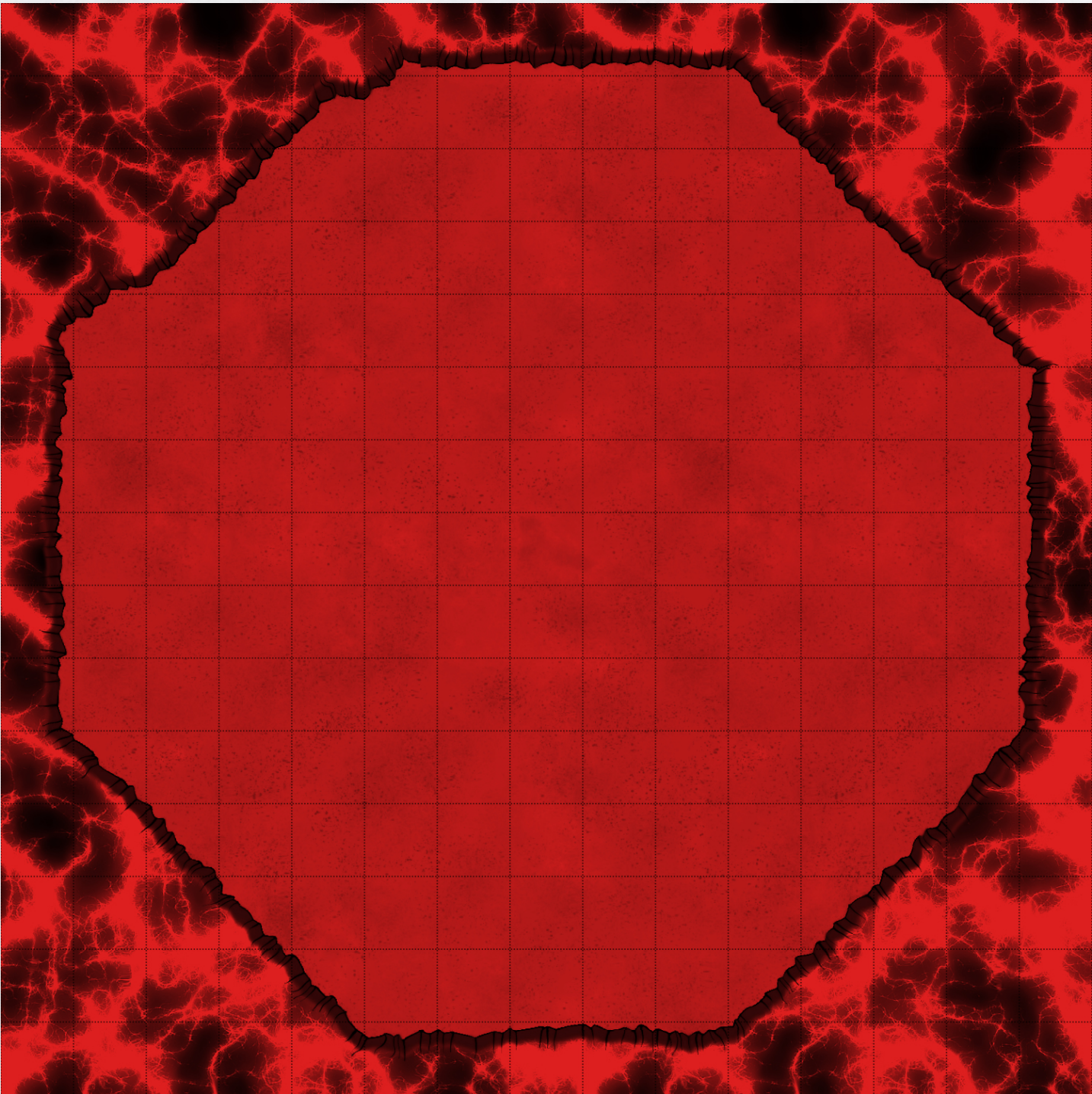
JUNGLE CLEARING

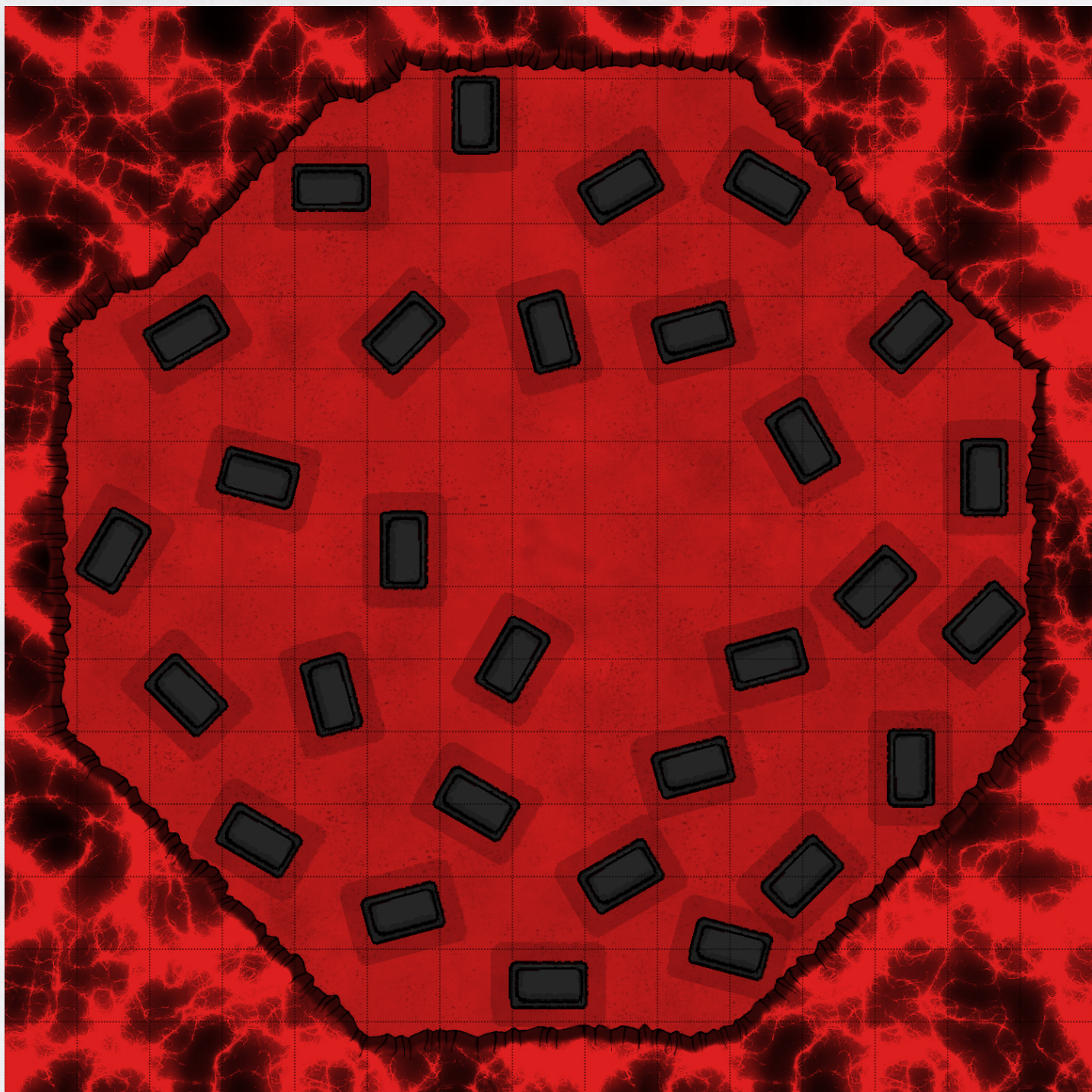


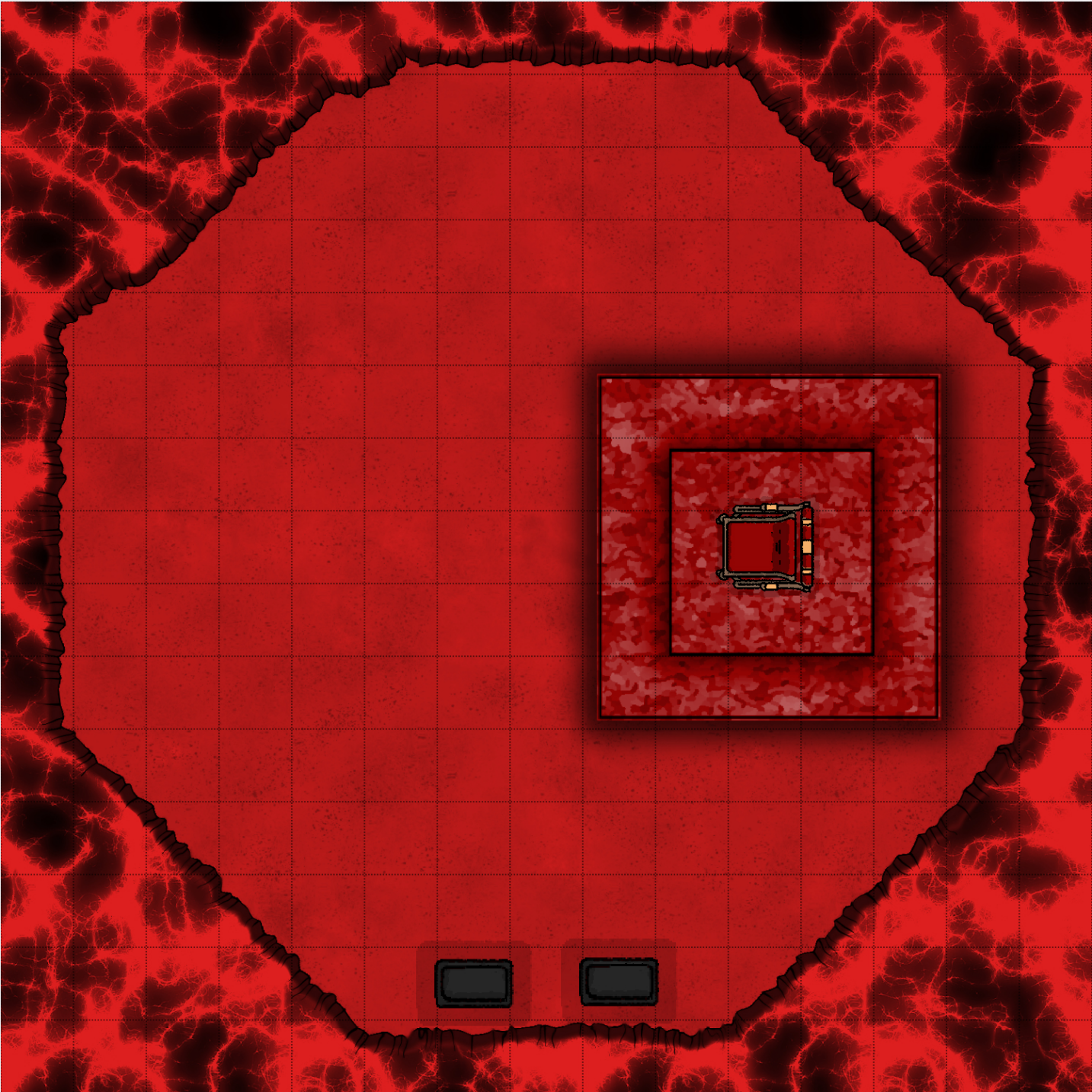
A top-down view of a game map. The terrain is primarily green grass with a fine, textured pattern. A winding, light-brown dirt path runs diagonally from the top right towards the bottom center. The path is composed of several rectangular segments. Various types of trees and bushes are scattered across the map. Some are large and leafy, while others are smaller and more rounded. Some trees have small, colorful flowers or berries on them. A grid of thin, light-colored lines is overlaid on the entire map, dividing it into small squares. The overall style is that of a hand-drawn or pixelated game environment.

JUNGLE RUINS





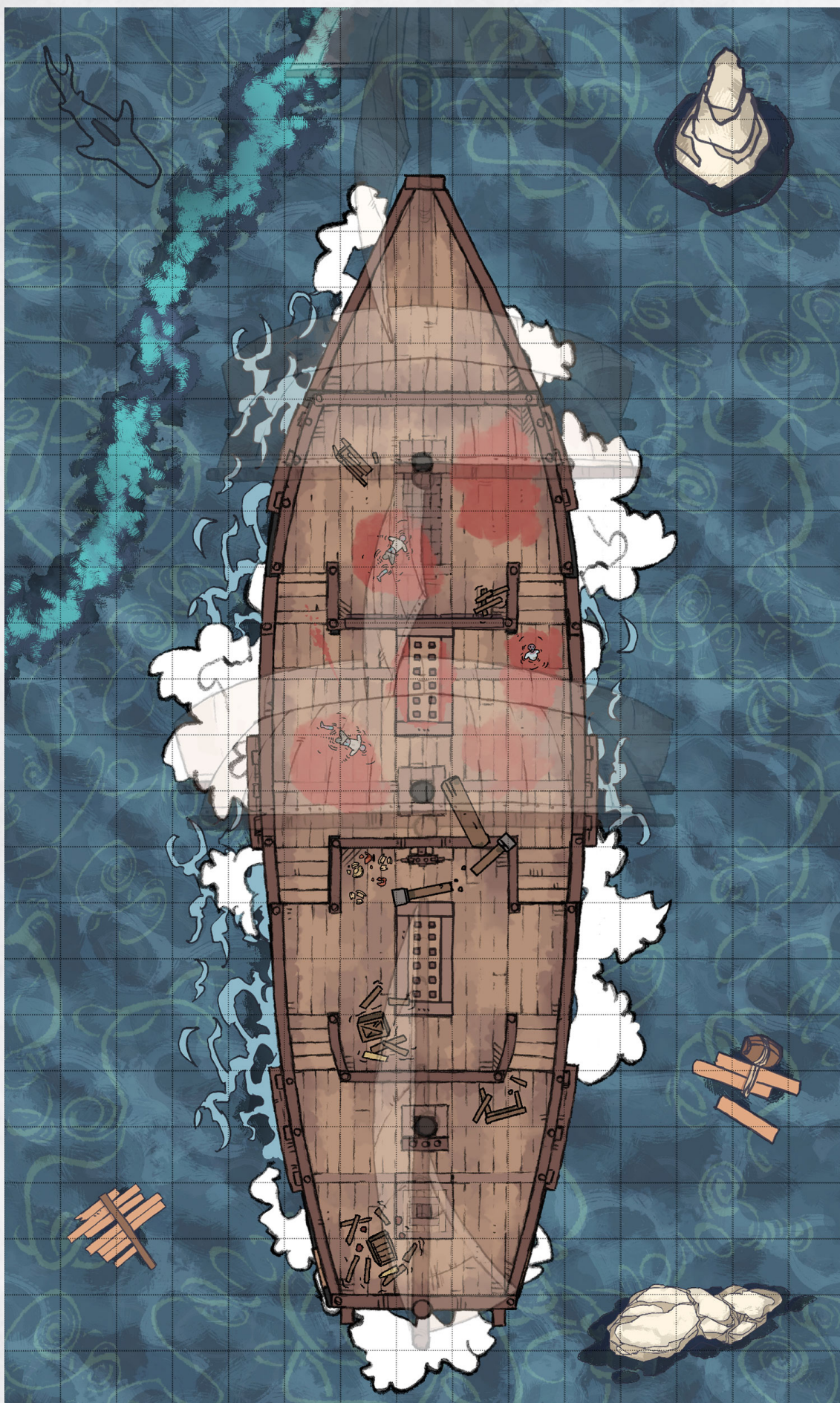


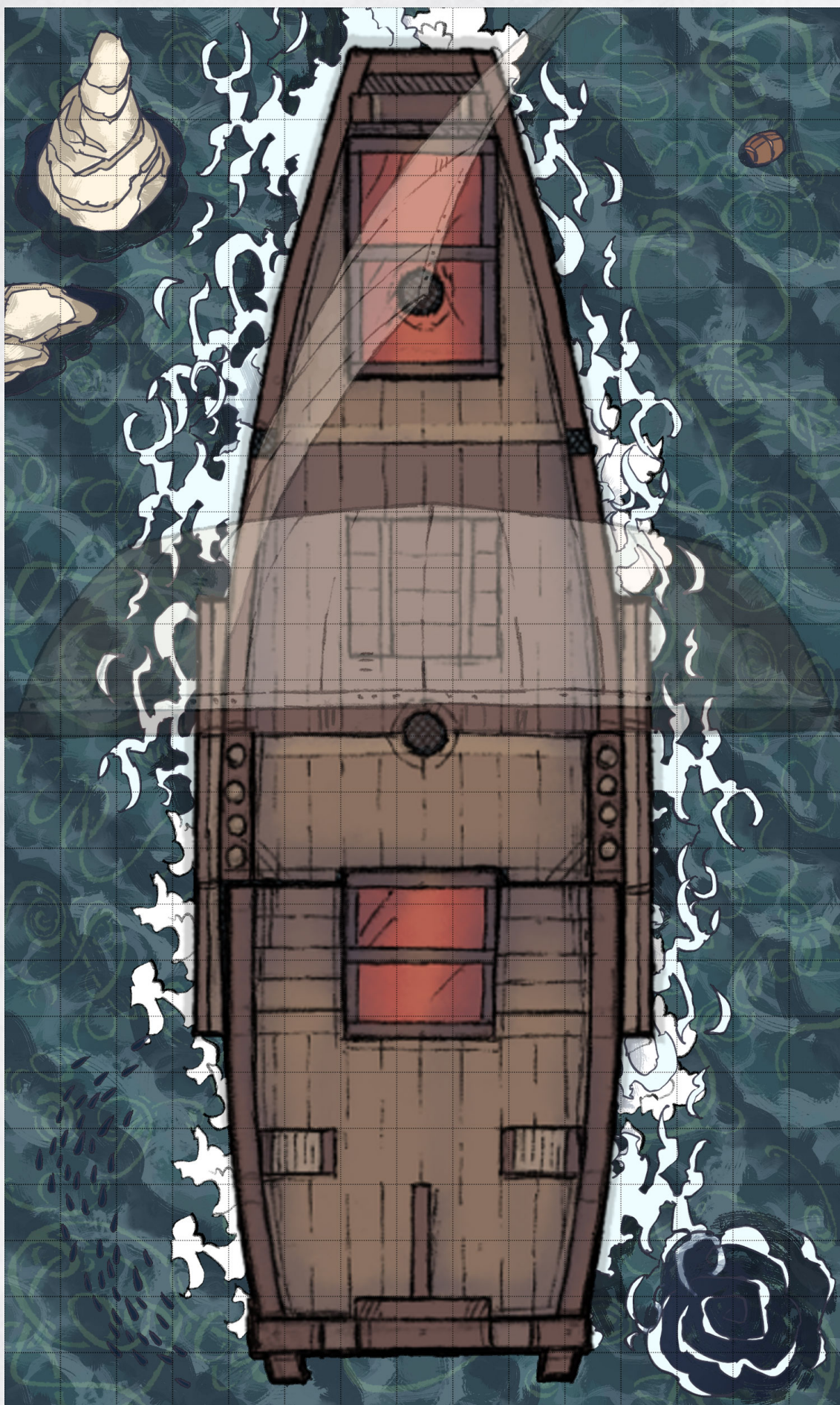


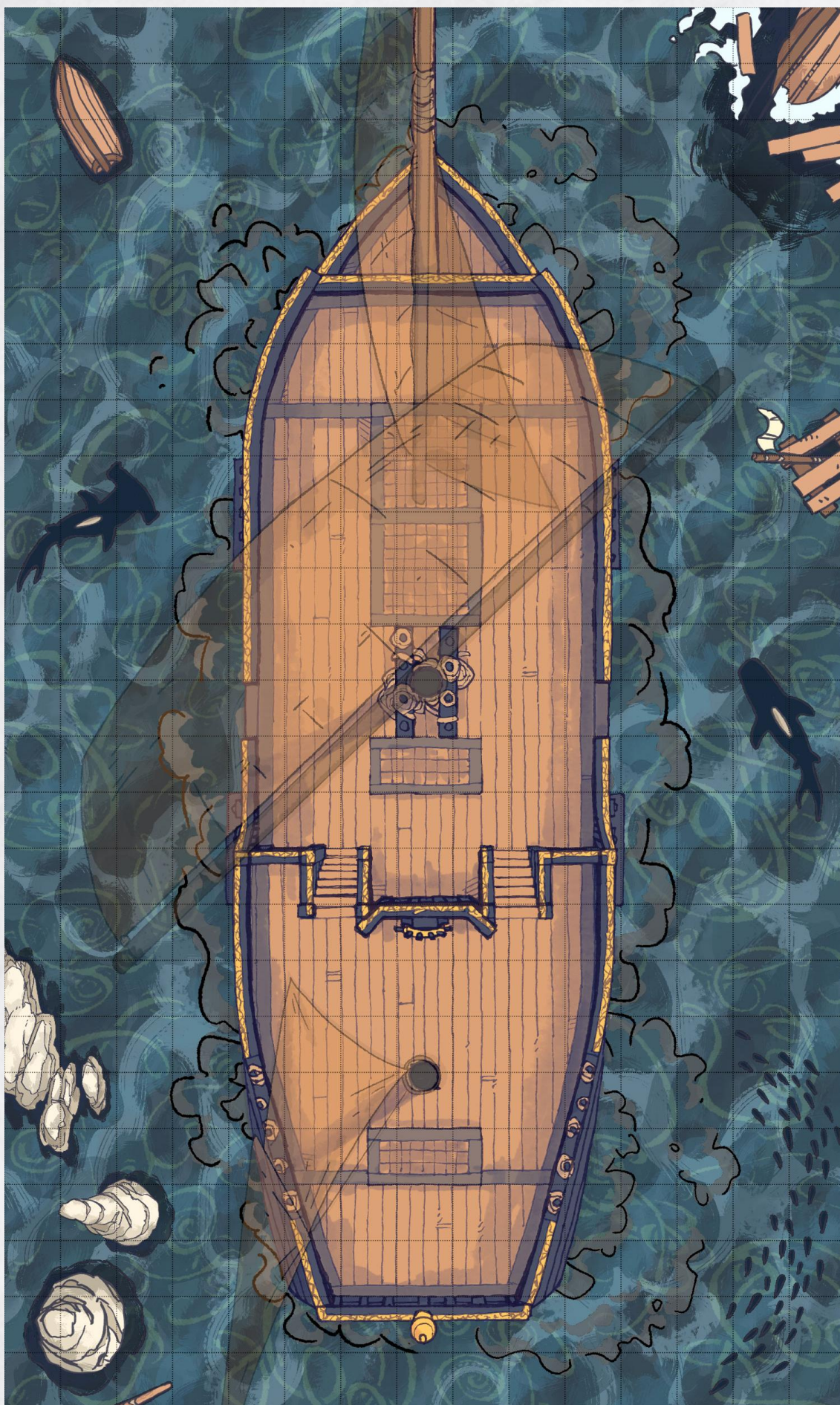




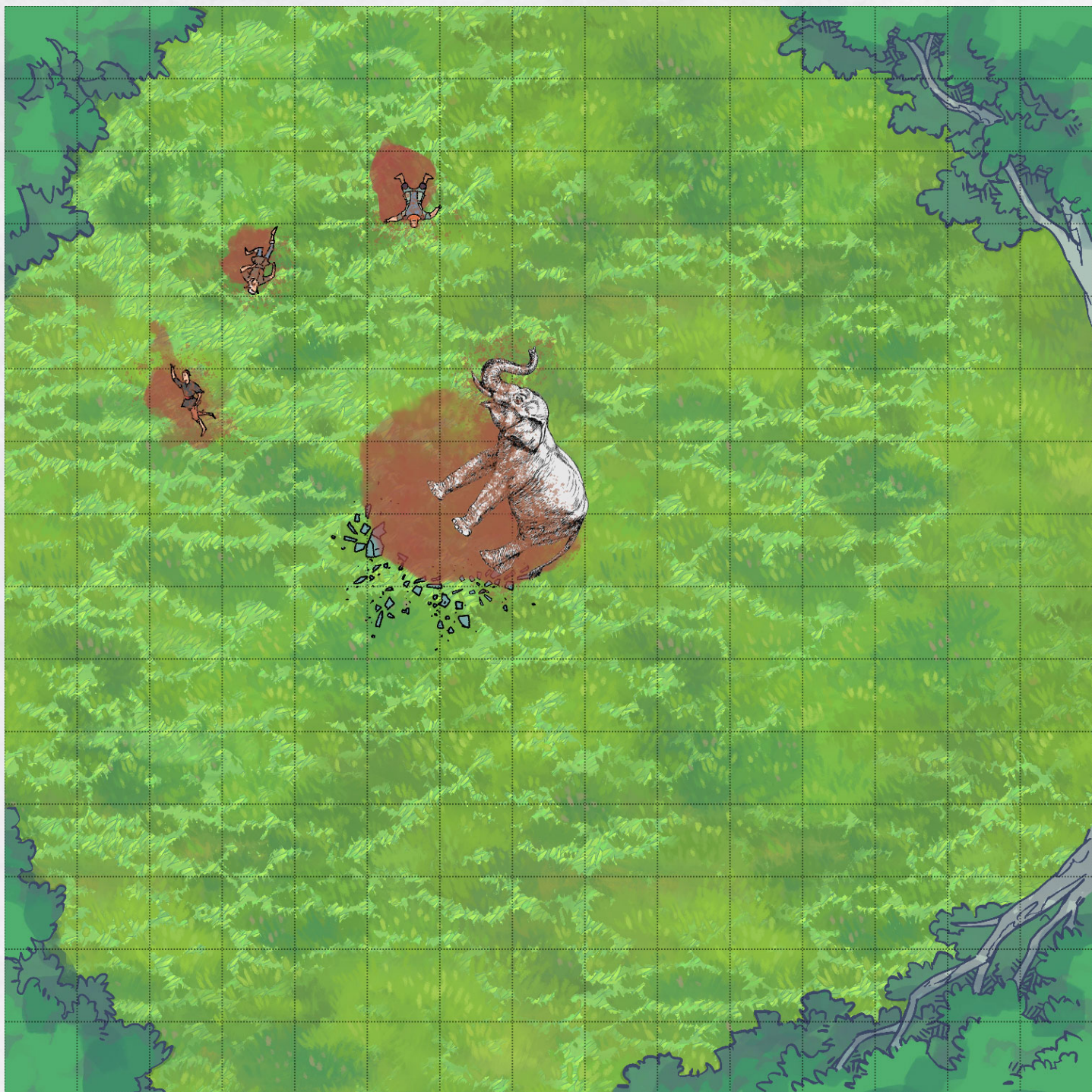
THE RACE TO SHORE--BOAT 1-ZOMBIE PIRATES



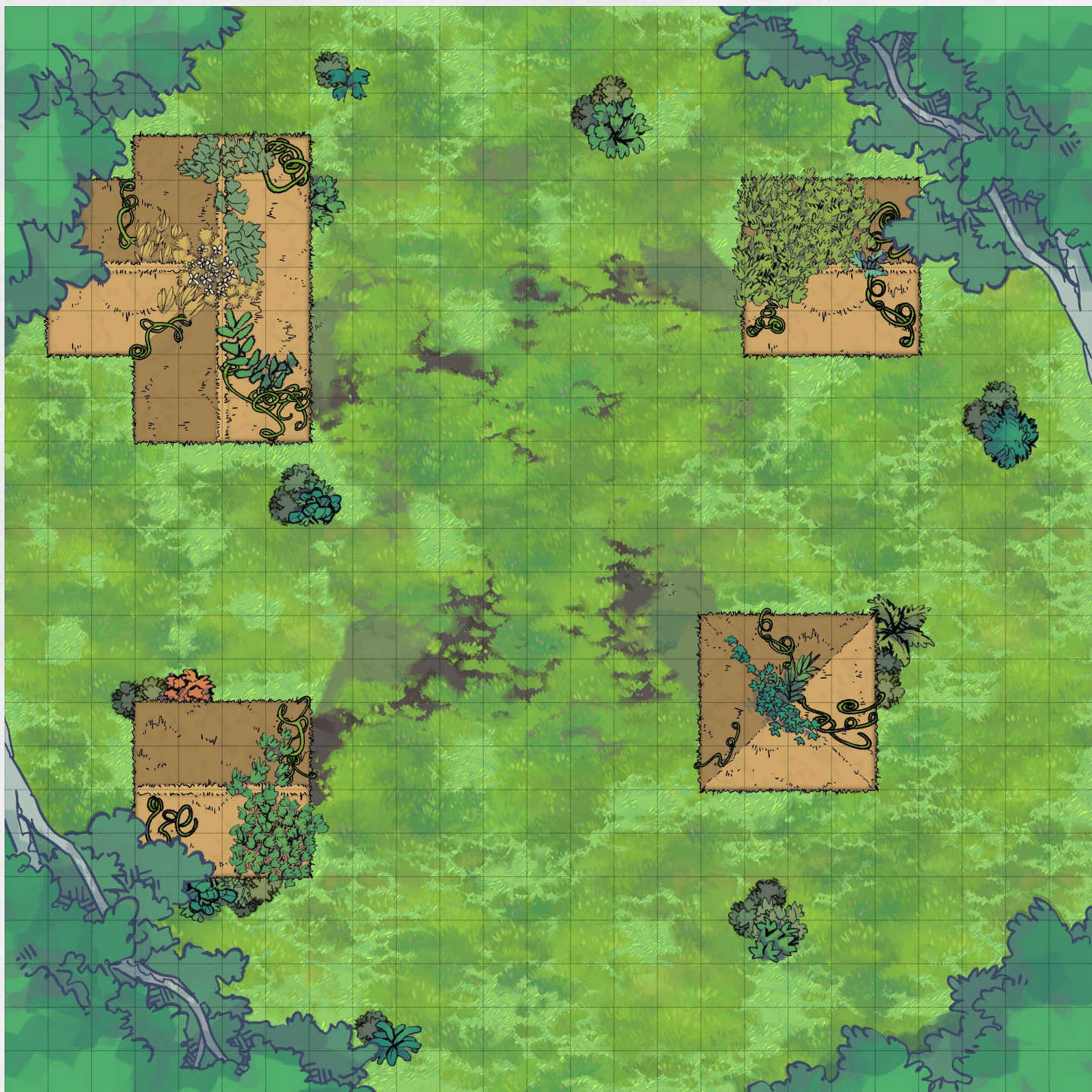




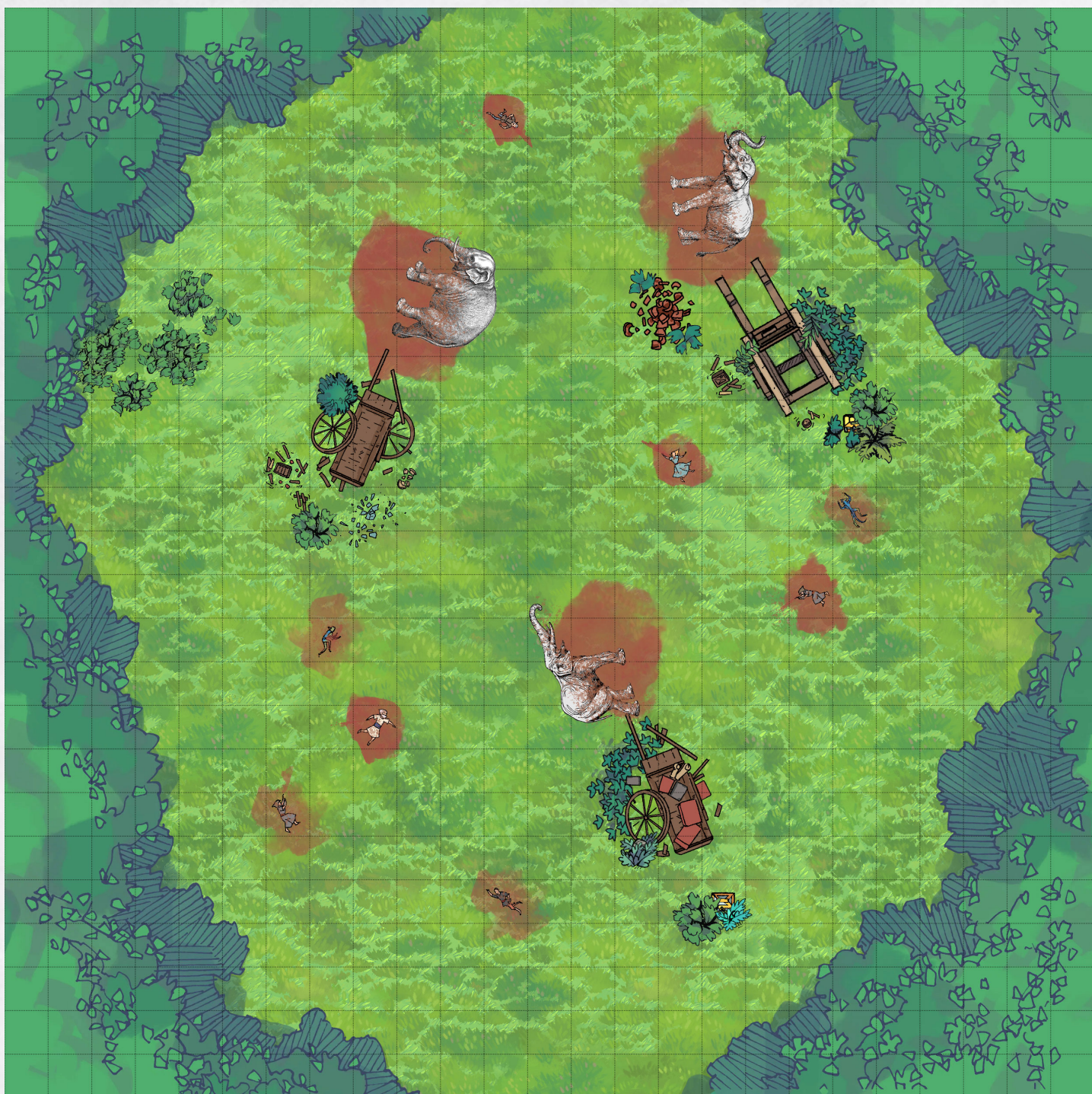
THE DEPTHS OF MADNESS--THE ALBINO ELEPHANT



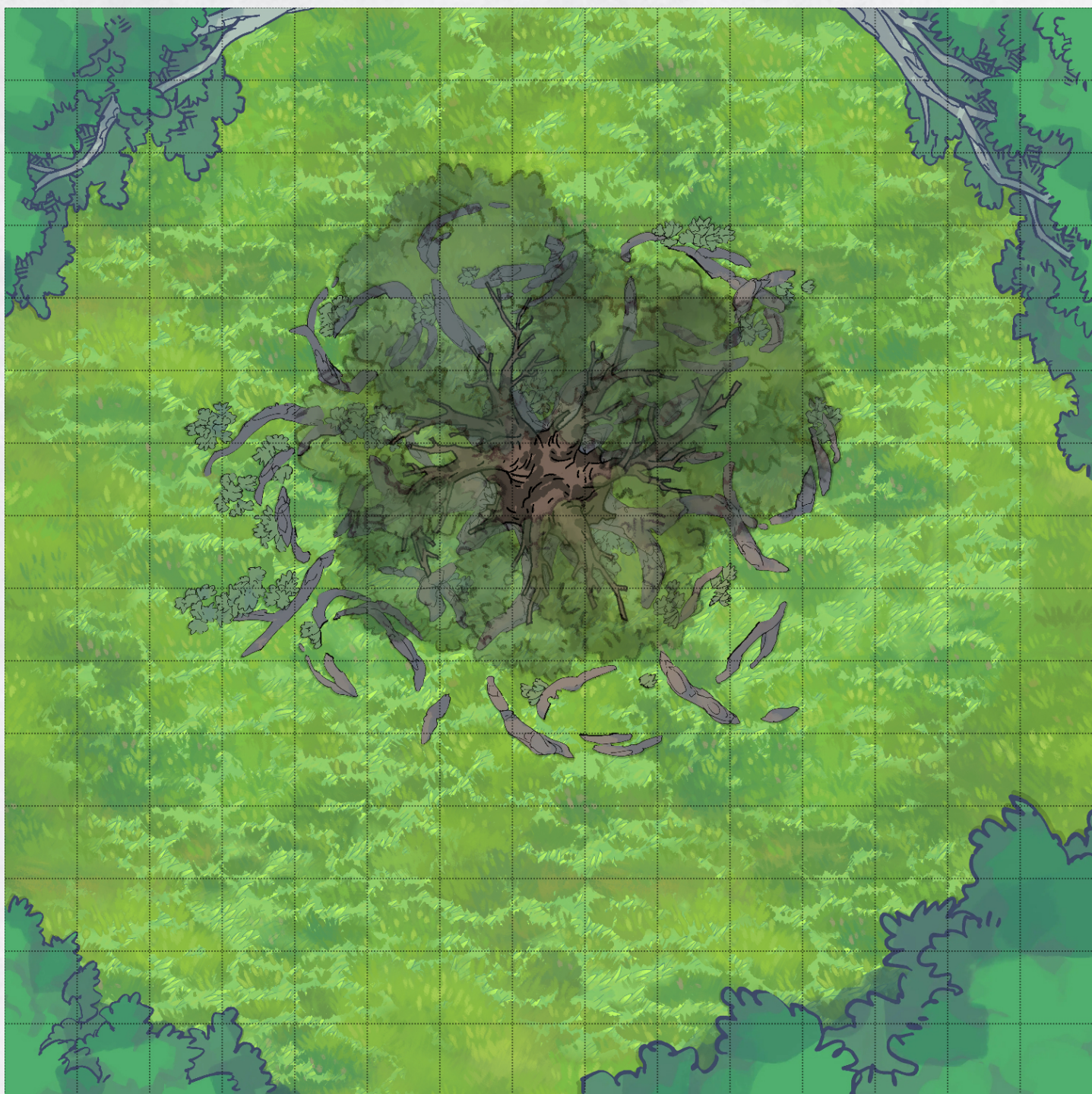
THE DEPTHS OF MADNESS--ABANDONED VILLAGE



THE DEPTHS OF MADNESS--WAGONS AND CARTS EVERYWHERE



THE DEPTHS OF MADNESS--TREE OF WEIRDING



THE DEPTHS OF MADNESS--JUNGLE TEMPLE RUINS

